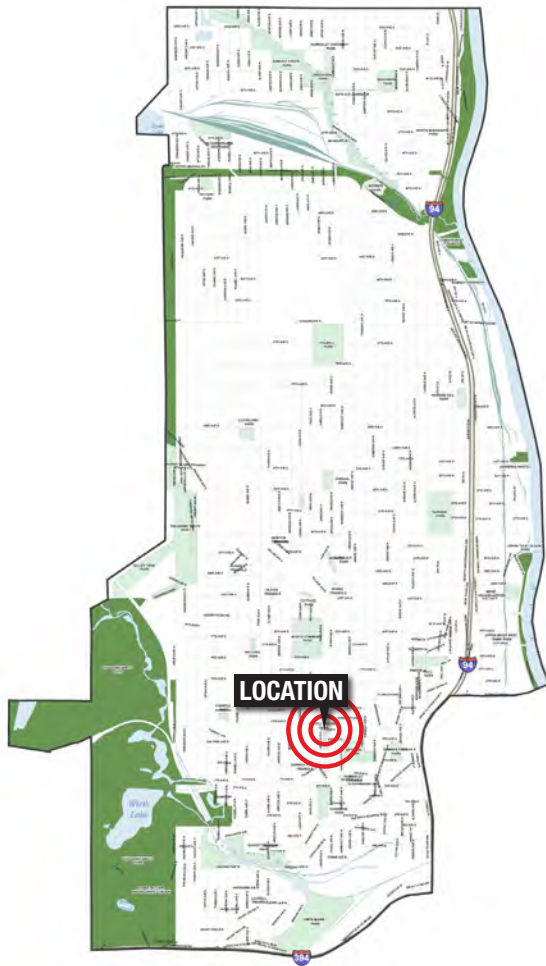


# LAUREL TRIANGLE



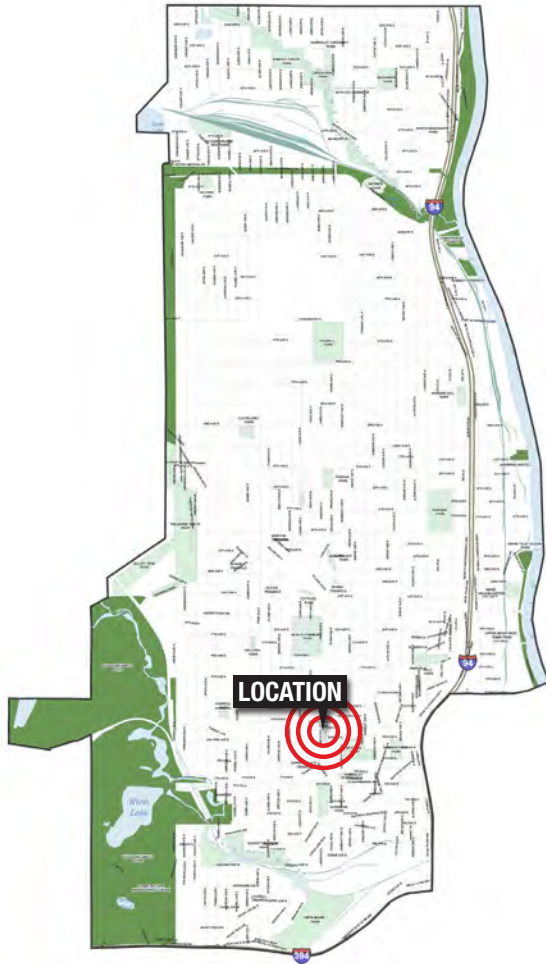
## LOCATION AND HISTORY

Laurel Triangle is a small triangle in the Bryn Mawr neighborhood, bounded by Cedar Lake Road, Laurel Avenue, and Oliver Avenue. It is a “special consideration park” that has been improved and is tended by the neighborhood group under a stewardship agreement with MPRB. The triangle is a lovely example of what a small triangle park can be. It includes stone seating blocks, an aggregate surface gathering area, and ornamental trees and shrubs. MPRB should continue this arrangement with the neighborhood organization. One improvement to consider would be an on-site water connection, to facilitate watering by the dedicated neighbors.

**NOTE:** In April of 2024, Farwell Park was renamed Lorraine B. Smaller Park. Though this park could appear here alphabetically, document formatting challenges prevents such a major change. Please look for Smaller Park under "F" in reference to its former name.

# LOVELL

# SQUARE PARK



## LOCATION AND HISTORY

The land for Lovell Square, a unusually shaped, long-and-skinny park near Bethune Park between Plymouth Avenue and Olson Highway was tendered to the park board by Elwood Corser, William Barnes and C.P. Lovell in 1887. It was officially named for Lovell in 1890. In 1889 the park was listed as 3.67 acres, but in the 1893 inventory the size of the park was reduced to 1.35 acres without any mention of the disposition of any land. A request to dig a well in the park was approved in 1916 after earlier attempts to have a well placed there were denied.

Active recreation in the park was discouraged when the park board agreed with requests from neighbors who objected to “big, rough boys” playing football and baseball in the park and endangering small children. In 1917 the Park Board posted signs prohibiting baseball and football games in the park.

A concrete tennis court was built at Lovell Square in 1938 by a federal work relief crew, one of 43 built around the city that year. The playgrounds were built in 1990.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS AND CHARACTER

Lovell Square is surrounded by streets that break the regular street grid of north Minneapolis. Knox and 11th Avenues are straight, while Oak Park and Irving Avenues create curving southern and eastern park edges. The park features a slight hill in the middle with play areas on the flat ground in the northern and southern ends of the park. Pathways wind throughout amongst

large trees of various types—both deciduous and evergreen. Lovell is a relatively quiet green space with good shade and nice topography.

## THE PROPOSED DESIGN

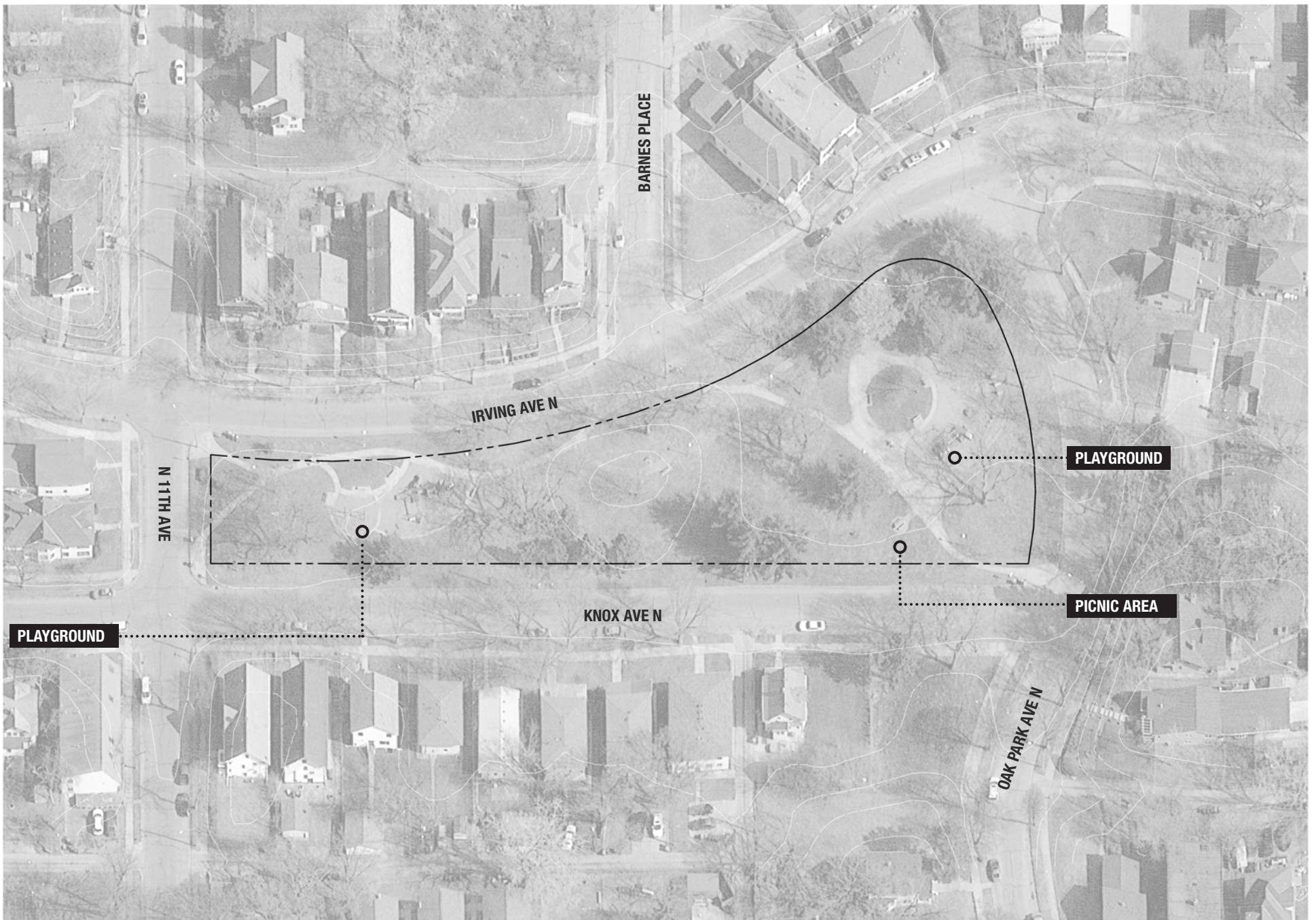
The design for Lovell Square strives to bring additional nature-based amenities to this small and narrow park. The play areas are consolidated at the southern end of the park, where there is more land. The northern play area is replaced with an urban agriculture area surrounded by naturalized plantings. The agriculture area could include community garden plots, a community orchard, a gathering space with an open air shelter, and pathways that welcome everyone into the lush and verdant growing area. The high promontory in the middle of the park is retained, with seating, and connects to the play area and gardens with winding pathways. Overall, the new Lovell Square will still offer important play opportunities in the neighborhood, while also becoming a draw for its exceptional natural areas, growing beds, and fruit trees.

## CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PARKS

Barnes Place provides a direct connection from the center of Lovell Square to Bethune Park, which is home to athletic facilities and a wading pool.

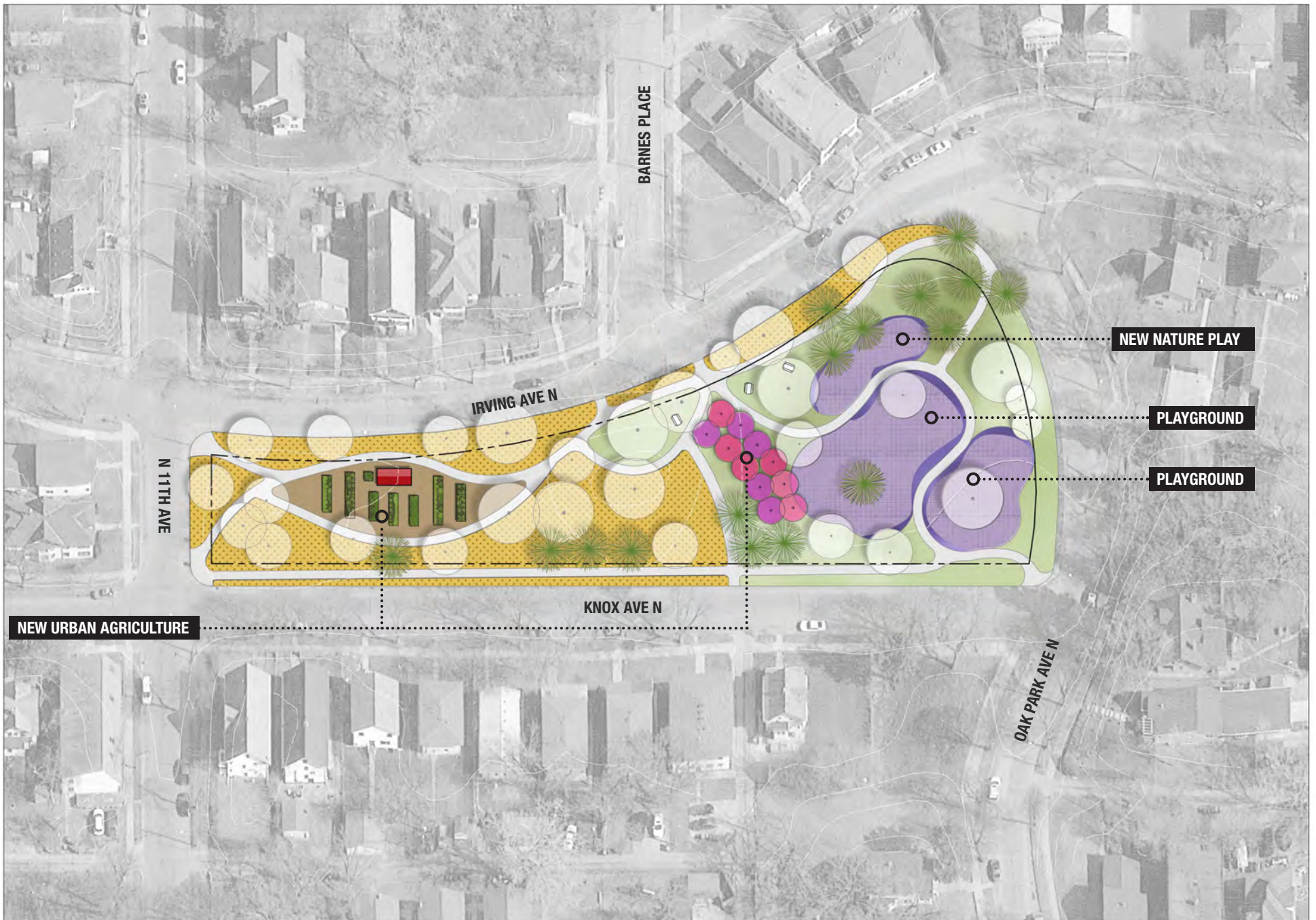
## KNOWN LAND USE AND COORDINATION ISSUES

No known land use or coordination issues exist at Lovell Square.



**EXISTING CONDITIONS: LOVELL SQUARE PARK**





**PROPOSED PLAN: LOVELL SQUARE PARK**

## PROCESSES

	<b>1: General Input Spring-Fall 2017</b> <i>Input themes prior to initial concepts</i>	<b>2: Initial Concepts Winter 2018</b> <i>Input themes on initial concepts</i>	<b>3: The Preferred Concept Now</b> <i>Key elements of the concept</i>
aquatics	no comments →	no comments →	No aquatic facilities planned for this park; park too small for this amenity
play	General satisfaction with playgrounds →	no comments →	New playgrounds consolidated at south end of park
athletics	no comments →	no comments →	No athletic facilities planned for this park
courts	no comments →	no comments →	No courts planned for this park
winter	no comments →	no comments →	No winter activities planned for this park
landscape	no comments →	Support for urban agriculture here →	Natural areas included around edges of park New community garden and orchard
other	Suggest adult workout equipment →	Love the walking loop around the urban ag area →	Revised walking paths

## COST ESTIMATE

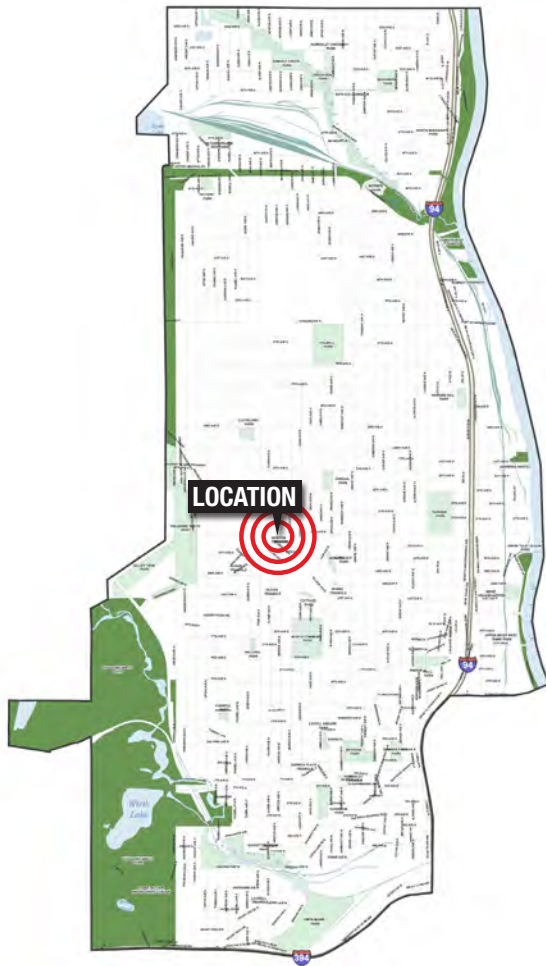
Park Name	Asset Type	Project	2019 ESTIMATED COST/PROJECT	NOTES
Lovell Square	Play	Traditional Play Structure in new container	\$ 806,809	
Lovell Square	Landscape	Naturalized areas	\$ 24,679	
Lovell Square	Landscape	Urban Agriculture Area	\$ 122,873	Urban Agriculture Areas will be implemented in partnership with specific programs or community members. Estimate includes water service and gathering shelter
Lovell Square	Other	Renovate walking paths	\$ 107,828	
Lovell Square	Other	Miscl. signs, trees, furniture	\$ 21,244	
<b>Lovell Square TOTAL</b>			<b>\$ 1,083,432</b>	

## OPERATIONS ESTIMATE

LOVELL SQUARE				
FACILITIES	Total Per Unit Operations Cost	△ Qty	△ Cost	
Nature Play	\$ 7,500	1	\$ 7,500	
Urban Agriculture	\$ 15,000	1	\$ 15,000	
<b>Difference</b>			<b>\$ 22,500</b>	



# NEWTON TRIANGLE



## LOCATION AND HISTORY

Newton Triangle is located north of Broadway Avenue along 25th Avenue at Newton and Irving Avenues. It was named (of course) for Newton Avenue, which was named (who knew?) for the physicist Isaac Newton. The triangle was transferred to the park board from the City of Minneapolis in 1892. The triangle was included in an MPRB appropriation for improvements to various triangles in 1909, but it is not clear what work was done under that appropriation. The triangle was graded, seeded, planted, and curbed in 1916.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS AND CHARACTER

The most notable feature of Newton Triangle is its stately oak trees. These giants shade the triangle with sculptural branches, an unusual quality of vegetation in a triangle. Newton Triangle is one of three triangles adjacent to 25th Avenue, with the other two owned by Hennepin County. The two triangles to the west have been transformed into community agriculture areas, with one becoming a community orchard and the other hosting straw bale farming and other growing options. Because of its trees, Newton would not make a great growing space, but could still leverage this agricultural investment in a different way.

## THE PROPOSED DESIGN

The primary idea behind Newton Triangle is for it to serve as a small community gathering space, especially for farmers, growers, and harvesters of the agricultural triangles to the west. Perhaps community members could work at the other triangles and rest here over fresh-picked fruit and vegetables. To that end, the design proposes an open air picnic shelter nestled under the landmark oaks. Newton would also be an ideal location for public art.

## CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PARKS

Newton Triangle and the other agricultural triangles are easily accessible from the 26th Avenue Greenway one block to the north. This Greenway connects Theodore Wirth Parkway in the west to the Mississippi River in the east.

## KNOWN LAND USE AND COORDINATION ISSUES

No known land use issues exist at Newton Triangle. Coordination with gardeners of the western triangles would enhance use of Newton Triangle.



**EXISTING CONDITIONS: NEWTON TRIANGLE**



**PROPOSED PLAN: NEWTON TRIANGLE**

SCALE: 1"=10'  
0 5 10 20

## PROCESSES

	<b>1: General Input Spring-Fall 2017</b> <i>Input themes prior to initial concepts</i>	<b>2: Initial Concepts Winter 2018</b> <i>Input themes on initial concepts</i>	<b>3: The Preferred Concept Now</b> <i>Key elements of the concept</i>
<b>aquatics</b>	no comments →	no comments →	No aquatic facilities planned for this park
<b>play</b>	no comments →	no comments →	No play facilities planned for this park
<b>athletics</b>	no comments →	no comments →	No athletic facilities planned for this park
<b>courts</b>	no comments →	no comments →	No courts planned for this park
<b>winter</b>	no comments →	no comments →	No winter activities planned for this park
<b>landscape</b>	no comments →	no comments →	Landscape retained as mown turf for gathering space
<b>other</b>	Park is in close proximity to urban agriculture initiatives by County; consider seating/gathering area →	no comments →	New picnic/gathering shelter along Newton; connects with growing areas on two County/City triangles just to the west  New public art opportunity under oaks in center of triangle

## COST ESTIMATE

Park Name	Asset Type	Project	2019 ESTIMATED COST/PROJECT	NOTES
Newton	Other	Group picnic shelter	\$ 104,411	
Newton	Other	Public Art	\$ -	Implemented in collaboration with City and non-profit groups
Newton	Other	Miscl. signs, trees, furniture	\$ 5,000	
Newton	TOTAL		\$ 109,411	

## OPERATIONS ESTIMATE

NEWTON TRIANGLE			
FACILITIES	Total Per Unit Operations Cost	△ Qty	△ Cost
Group Shelter	\$ 4,000	1	\$ 4,000
Difference			\$ 4,000



# NORTH COMMONS PARK



## LOCATION AND HISTORY

North Commons Park is a large block bounded by Golden Valley Road, James Avenue, Morgan Avenue, and 16th Avenue. It sits in what many consider to be the heart of the north side, close to Broadway Avenue and surrounded by a racially and ethnically diverse neighborhood. The park was purchased in 1907, but there had already been some history of advocacy to provide another park for the north side in addition to Farview Park. In 1889 the board had designated for acquisition a slightly smaller parcel four blocks to the east, an area called Todd's Pond, which later became the football field at the first North High School. At that time a large majority of landowners in the neighborhood objected to the purchase, or more precisely they objected to paying for it by assessments on their property. The argument they used was that the proposed site was too near Farview Park. The board abandoned that acquisition in early 1890.

Playground equipment was installed at North Commons in 1908 following the board's highly successful introduction of playground apparatus in other parks in 1906 and 1907. It was one of the first five parks to receive basketball goals in 1908. In 1910 the park board began more significant improvements to the park and built one of the park system's first three year-round "field houses" at North Commons. The building at North Commons was larger than those built at Jackson Square and Camden (Webber) Park.

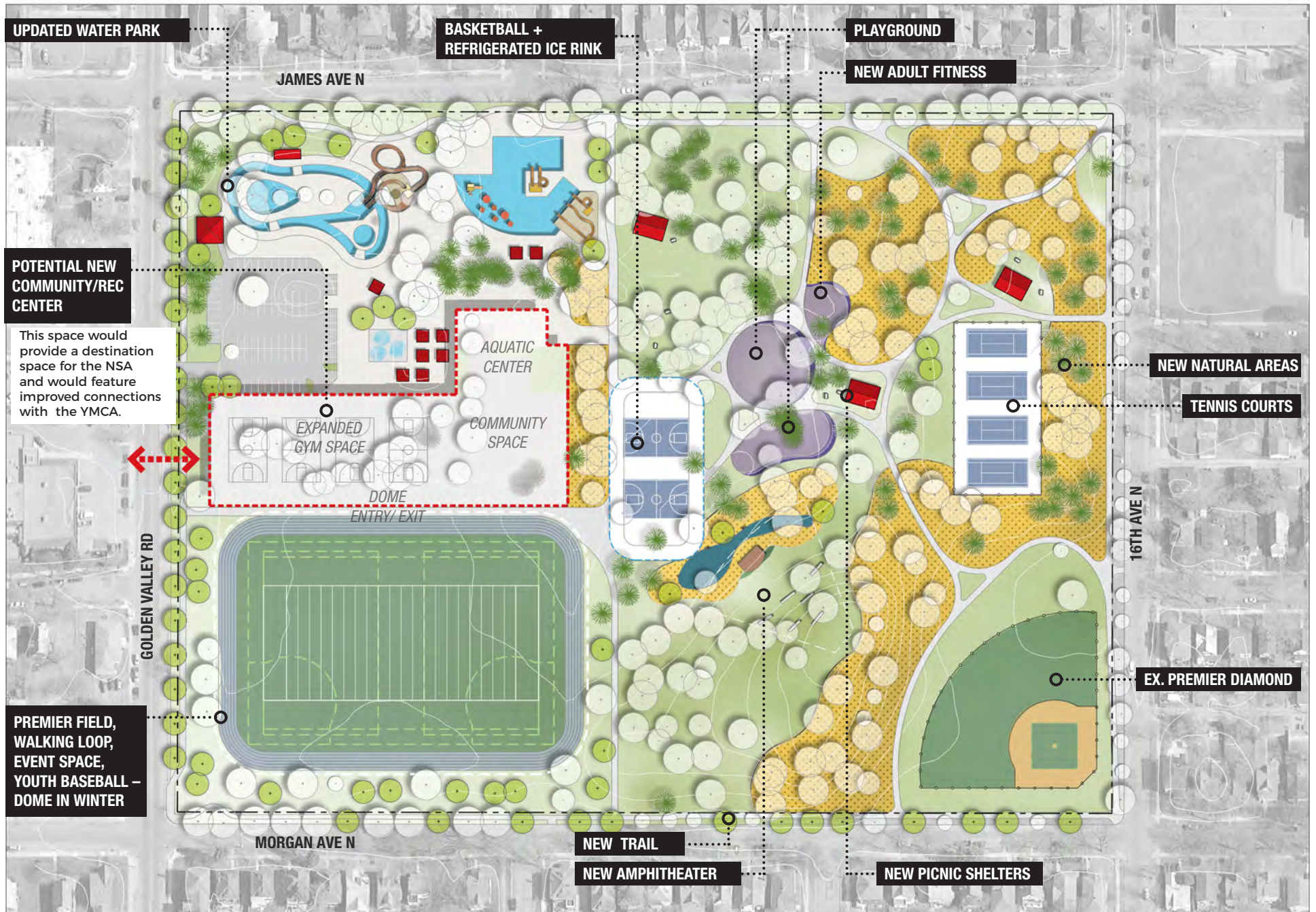
The improvements also included more space for playing fields than Wirth had proposed in his first plan for the park. By 1911 North Commons had already become one of the parks most heavily used for sports. Football goalposts were installed at North Commons and there was such demand for playing space that North Commons was the only park aside from Parade where permits were required to use the baseball and football fields.

In 1912 a wading pool, one of the city's first, was built in the park. The park also got its first tennis courts in 1912. By the end of 1914, most planned improvements had been made to North Commons—grading, filling, and the addition of more tennis and basketball courts—and Wirth noted that "on the whole North Commons makes a good appearance and is one of our most useful and most frequented parks." At that time, more had been spent on the improvement of North Commons than any other neighborhood park in the city, other than Logan Park, where a much larger and more expensive fieldhouse had been built. In 1916, Wirth completed a driveway through North Commons (a driveway that had not appeared in any earlier plans in annual reports), along with installation of a backstop for the baseball field and a bandstand. A fifth tennis court was added to the park in 1917, when Wirth noted that the south section of the park had finally been completed.

Along with these improvements came heavy use. By 1921, Wirth noted that the playing fields were possibly the most frequented in the whole park system. He recommended then that the small shelter be replaced with a larger fieldhouse, a suggestion he would make several times in the 1920s to no avail. The catch



**EXISTING CONDITIONS: NORTH COMMONS PARK**



**PROPOSED PLAN: NORTH COMMONS PARK**



## PROCESSES

	<b>1: General Input Spring-Fall 2017</b> <i>Input themes prior to initial concepts</i>	<b>2: Initial Concepts Winter 2018</b> <i>Input themes on initial concepts</i>	<b>3: The Preferred Concept Now</b> <i>Key elements of the concept</i>
<b>aquatics</b>	<p>Waterpark is well liked, but desire for expansion, higher quality facilities</p> <p>Desire for waterpark to be free for north side residents</p> <p>Desire for year-round use of water park</p> <p>Feeling that wading pool should be redone with splash features, slides, and make it bigger</p>	<p>Support for waterpark expansion, suggestion to enclose it for winter use</p> <p>Suggestion to include splash pad for smaller kids</p>	<p>Renovated, relocated, and potentially enclosed waterpark in new location at northeast corner of park</p> <p>Wading pool removed in favor of including splash features and small child elements within waterpark, within a non-fee area</p>
<b>play</b>	<p>Play area is generally disliked: concerns about equipment quality</p> <p>Concerns about placement of play area and safety</p>	<p>no comments</p>	<p>Traditional play areas refurbished in same general location</p>
<b>athletics</b>	<p>Premier diamond is universally liked</p> <p>Multi-use field considered more important than softball/baseball (at northwest corner)</p>	<p>No comments on premier diamond</p> <p>General community support for premier field and dome</p> <p>Significant opposition among park neighbors for the winter sports dome</p>	<p>Premier diamond retained in same location</p> <p>Northwestern diamonds eliminated in favor of premier field with walking loop and winter sports dome (entry through expanded recreation center)</p>
<b>courts</b>	<p>Mixed opinion on tennis courts, mainly due to condition</p> <p>Basketball courts well used and liked, suggestion for more</p>	<p>Tennis desired in park</p> <p>No comments on outdoor basketball</p>	<p>Tennis courts retained in current location and expanded to 4 courts</p> <p>Two full-court basketball relocated and combined with refrigerated ice rink in winter</p>

was that the fieldhouse would only be built if residents of the area agreed to pay for it with property assessments. This was at a time when almost all neighborhood park improvements throughout the city required the approval of local landowners to pay for them. The continued popularity of North Commons, and the lack of funds to improve it further, was indicated in 1924 when Wirth suggested that plans to improve the driveway through the park be abandoned and the park converted exclusively to pedestrian use. By 1928 attendance at playground activities at North Commons almost doubled that of any other park in the city. A huge participation in diamond ball, what later became known as softball, was noted at North Commons.

In 1955 and 1956, improvements were made at North Commons for the first time in more than thirty years. The playing fields were enlarged and regraded, play equipment was added and a new concrete wading pool was built. The shelter built in 1910—and outdated by 1921 in Wirth’s opinion—was not replaced, but it was modernized and was designated as one of six district community centers in the park system. The park board’s 1956 annual report claimed that attendance at the park tripled after its modernization.

The venerable old shelter was finally demolished and replaced with a new community center with a gymnasium in 1971, one of the first new centers constructed at the beginning of a building boom in Minneapolis parks in the 1970s. Two years later, an outdoor swimming pool was built at North Commons, making it the first (and

still only one of two, since the construction of the Northeast Recreation Center) Minneapolis park with both a gym and a swimming pool.

The swimming pool was closed in 1997 and reopened a year later as the North Commons Water Park—with gadgets, geysers, slides, and “funbrellas”—another first in Minneapolis parks. The community center underwent renovation in 1999 and that year the North Commons outdoor basketball courts were renovated with a gift from the Minnesota Timberwolves. In 2000, the North Commons community center was one of the first five city park facilities to be outfitted with a computer lab. The North Commons tennis courts were rehabbed in 2004. In 2011 one of the baseball diamonds was upgraded into a high-quality synthetic turf facility.

## **EXISTING CONDITIONS AND CHARACTER**

North Commons today is an active park that still holds to its tradition of major participation in athletic programs. The northern half of the park is primarily dedicated to active uses, while the southern half features some of the highest quality stands of trees in the entire neighborhood park system. Landmark oaks and stately conifers are living sculptures among which passes a network of walking trails. This calm, green, meditative section of the park is an important counterpoint to the active uses in the north half. The park is mostly flat, but a small hill rises up on the western side, creating an interesting vantage point over the fields and forests.

A synthetic turf softball field occupies the southwestern corner of the park, and a pair of

tennis courts nestle into the trees across from North High School along 16th Avenue.

The recreation center building sits at the pivot point between the wooded and the active. It faces James Avenue; to the north is a parking lot with access from Golden Valley Road. South of the recreation center, at the fringes of the woodland, is a circular wading pool and a set of play areas. In the very center of the park are two full-court basketball courts.

The water park sits adjacent to Golden Valley Road. It features a splash play area, a deep pool, and a pair of tall water slides. The waterpark is well-loved and active, though the cost of admission is often cited as a barrier to access. MPRB has made efforts to keep costs low, but the economic realities of surrounding neighborhoods can limit people’s ability to pay even minimal fees. A second park building is associated with the water park and provides space for staff, storage, restrooms, and ticket taking.

The main athletic fields area is to the west of the water park, in the northwest corner of the park. A full-size football field, with goal posts, occupies the eastern portion of the field, while two diamonds (one with grass infield) sit on the western. The grass-infield diamond is used by North High School’s teams. North Commons today includes many of the features and is home to much of the use historically present in the park. The athletic focus, including some of the earliest non-lake swimming options, has always been a part of this park. And through time, under the foresight of long ago foresters

## PROCESSES (CONT.)

	<b>1: General Input Spring-Fall 2017</b> <i>Input themes prior to initial concepts</i>	<b>2: Initial Concepts Winter 2018</b> <i>Input themes on initial concepts</i>	<b>3: The Preferred Concept Now</b> <i>Key elements of the concept</i>
winter	Desire for ice skating/hockey, possibly refrigerated rink →	Support for refrigerated ice rink →	New refrigerated hockey rink and skating area combined with basketball courts
landscape	Desire to retain peaceful, tree-canopied southern/central portion of park →	Strong support for retaining major trees in the vicinity of the existing recreation center building and parking lot →	Major trees and dense canopy preserved throughout southern half of park New naturalized areas amongst paths throughout southern half of park
other	<p>Suggestion for outdoor amphitheater</p> <p>Suggestion for skate park</p> <p>Meditative spaces →</p> <p>Walking loops throughout park</p> <p>In addition to specific amenities mentioned, also expressed desire for major re-thinking and investment in the park: indoor sports, larger rec center, etc.</p>	<p>Support for amphitheater, but suggest regular programming</p> <p>Support for skate park</p> <p>Desire for public art →</p> <p>Support for walking track above basketball gyms →</p> <p>General support in community and within work group for Concept B, which envisions the large field house and winter sports dome</p> <p>Significant opposition among park neighbors for the winter sports dome</p> <p>Support for outdoor adult fitness area</p>	<p>New outdoor amphitheater and stage</p> <p>Skate park not included in master plan</p> <p>New picnic shelters near play area</p> <p>New walking/running track (year-round) along with premier field; revised walking paths create loops throughout park</p> <p>Possible new expanded recreation center / field house / art center with skyway connection to YMCA and new entrance facing expanded parking along eastern edge of park. Building serves as entry to winter dome and to renovated water park</p> <p>New adult fitness area near play area</p>

and designers, the trees have grown to create a newer reason to be in the park. North Commons, however, at nine city blocks in size (one if the largest neighborhood aprks in the Minneapolis system) feels large enough to accommodate both the activity and the respite, the peaceful strolls under the trees and the exciting games on the fields and in the gym.

## THE PROPOSED DESIGN

The design for North Commons Park recognizes the two critical functions of the park—quiet time under the trees and active athletic use—and retains them each in their halves of the site. The southern half of the park sees more modest change, with all improvements careful to preserve existing tree cover. The play areas are refurbished in their existing locations, though the wading pool is decommissioned in favor of a small-child, fee-free portion of the water park (this allows for consolidation of mechanical facilities). The premier diamond in the southwest corner remains. Tennis is expanded from two courts to four, in recognition of the limited number of tennis courts in the immediate area.

The small hill is converted into a casual amphitheater, with a stage at the bottom and some seating scattered on the slope. This part of town has become home to a thriving arts community—something regularly noted as being underserved in the park. This amphitheater could be programmed by MPRB staff and could also be used by community members for small performances, rehearsals, spoken word battles, and other happenings. Throughout the southern

half of the park, the groundplane under the trees is naturalized with woodland vegetation, to complete the feeling of being in the forest. Open-air picnic shelters are scattered through this landscape—perhaps designed in a special way that fits them into the forest—providing more of a state park/national park kind of picnicking option.

The northern half of the park is one of the collaborative “big moves” called for in the NSAMP document. The intent of what will be significantly expensive renovations is to leverage the long history of activity in the park, the vibrant surrounding community, and central location of North Commons to create a visionary and prominent activity hub that can compete with major recreation facilities in the suburbs. At the core of this is a possible new community center that would serve the artistic, gathering, and athletic needs of the north side. It is recommended to include gym space to accommodate four basketball courts or any other combination of sporting options (wrestling, gymnastics, volleyball, cheer squad etc.), community rooms, arts and media spaces, and exciting youth spaces where kids can interact positively with each other and with MPRB staff. A walking/running track above the gym provides an indoor option for seniors and other runners.

Though not fully designed, of course, one vision for this building is to sink it down into the earth, to minimize height. The gyms then, below grade, could have upper level (ground level) windows, to ensure natural light and to prevent the building having blank brick facades facing

the park. Because the parking lot is located adjacent to Golden Valley Road, the building could potentially cut off the parking from the rest of the park. It is therefore important that the main community spaces be transparent and permeable, so it is easy to pass through the building between the halves of the park. The building will also consolidate all building-related uses into one space, reducing redundancy and ensuring comprehensive contact between park users and MPRB youth assistance staff. The entry to the water park (along with aquatics staff areas and storage) would be through the main building, as would the entrance to the winter sports dome. This move concentrates all park activity into this one central, exciting hub.

The waterpark is relocated and rebuilt farther east, adjacent to James Avenue. It could include large slides, as before, and also a greater variety of options, like a lazy river, lap pool, and shady areas for picnics. A wading pool/splash pad for little kids is included in this area, but should remain fee-free, as a replacement of the existing wading pool. West of the building, the field and diamonds area is replaced with a full-size synthetic turf field that can accommodate football, soccer, and practice ball diamond infields. A synthetic walking track encircles the fields. In winter, a temporary inflatable sports dome encloses the field and track, to extend the season for sports and events. The building serves as the entry to the dome. A new baseball diamond is implemented at Bethune Park, to replace the one lost here at North Commons. Additional field space is also improved at Willard

## COST ESTIMATE

Asset Type	Project	2019 ESTIMATED COST/PROJECT
Aquatics	Renovation and relocation of water park	\$ 6,644,309
Play	Traditional Play Structure in existing container	\$ 484,085
Athletics	Premier Athletic Field, corner of Morgan and Golden Valley Road	\$ 1,898,374
Athletics	Premier Diamond, Morgan and 16th	\$ 2,192,020
Athletics	Sports Dome, removable in winter	\$ 6,207,683
Courts	Tennis Court (2)	\$ 493,577
Courts	Basketball Court (2), with refrigeration for winter ice	\$ 436,626
Landscape	Naturalized areas	\$ 170,854
Landscape	New parking lot	\$ 575,262
Other	Possible new building	\$ -
Other	Group picnic shelters (2)	\$ 208,821
Other	Renovate walking paths	\$ 1,214,959
Other	Amphitheater and stage	\$ 104,411
Other	Miscl. signs, trees, furniture	\$ 412,620
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 21,043,602</b>

Note: Final building scope not determined inder NSAMP; will be considered by RecQuest

Park, which could serve as a practice and game satellite for this park.

In order to serve these new, likely more intense uses, MPRB will collaborate with the City of Minneapolis to redevelop the block across Golden Valley Road from the eastern end of the park. A possibility for this site is to create, along with residential or commercial uses, a district parking option for Broadway Avenue, which can also serve park users as overflow parking.

Because the big move to rebuild the water park, create a new type of center, and dome the field is a significant change and financial investment, it cannot be accomplished by MPRB funds alone. Collaboration with community partners, foundations, private entities, and other agencies will be necessary. MPRB is committed to this vision for the north side, but will need help. Community members are already working toward coalitions to make this a reality, and that work must continue in earnest.

Along with this vision have come some concerns, particularly about north side residents' ability to participate in the construction, operation, and actual use of these new facilities. Some residents fear they will be excluded from the facility because fees will be high, because outside groups will dominate rentals, or simply because they will not feel welcome because of the color of their skin or their economic status. MPRB is committed, in any vision, to ensure equitable access to new facilities. Though a physical master plan like this cannot pre-determine operations down the road, MPRB and the community

have developed a set of guiding principles for the implementation of the North Commons vision. Future designers, planners, operators, and managers need to carefully consider these principles upon implementation, because this is the voice of community concern. Without consideration of these principles, this vision could become exactly what people fear: an exclusive playground for non-north-siders. This vision is for the north side, which deserves this kind of facility.

A vision like this can also raise fears of economic displacement through gentrification. It is again MPRB's intent to build a facility like this for residents that use the park now. MPRB has little jurisdiction over housing policy, but understands that parks can be seen as contributors to gentrification. The solution, however, is not to limit park development, thereby keeping neighborhoods underserved and desirable. The goal must be to improve parks, make neighborhoods even better than they are, and then help people stay in place. MPRB will continue to work with the City of Minneapolis on this issue, and will address this conundrum explicitly in its next Comprehensive Plan.

The proposed design for North Commons envisions major and necessary change in the northern half of the park. It also seeks to preserve the forested, meditative character of the southern half. Throughout its history, North Commons has been growing toward this future—growing the gravity of athletics and swimming, and growing the forest that provides a retreat from the city. The new North Commons will improve and accentuate both.

## CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PARKS

The proposed Northside Greenway passes just one block east of the park, and will have a direct connection to the park. The Greenway connects to numerous parks north of North Commons. A proposed park connection on 16th Avenue connects eastward to Hall Park and westward to Willard Park.

## KNOWN LAND USE AND COORDINATION ISSUES

Certain aspects of the guiding principles, most notably athletic field relocations, also requires coordination with Minneapolis Public Schools. Implementation of park-serving district parking requires coordination with the City of Minneapolis. Implementation of the new amenities on the northern half of the park will, as stated in the proposed design narrative, require partnerships, particularly around funding.

## OPERATIONS ESTIMATE

NORTH COMMONS			
FACILITIES	Total Per Unit Operations Cost	△ Qty	△ Cost
Outdoor Fitness	\$ 2,500	1	\$ 2,500
Multi-use Diamonds	\$ 20,000	-2	\$ (40,000)
Premier Field	\$ 20,000	1	\$ 20,000
Sports Dome	\$ 80,000	1	\$ 80,000
Tennis Court	\$ 1,500	2	\$ 3,000
Refrigerated Ice Rink	\$ 80,000	1	\$ 80,000
Group Shelter	\$ 4,000	3	\$ 12,000
Amphitheater	\$ 1,500	1	\$ 1,500
Trail Additions	\$ 5,000	1	\$ 5,000
Difference			\$ 164,000

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Minneapolis park and Recreation Board (MPRB) is considering major improvements at North Commons Park that could bring expanded and enhanced recreation, community gathering, arts and media, and event options to north Minneapolis. Understandably, however, the community has expressed concern that if something new and exciting is built, it will attract outside interest and become less available to the north side community.

These guiding principles are meant as reminders and encouragements that when this facility is built, community use is at the forefront. Decision-making around programming, operations, maintenance, and staffing of this facility should keep the community at the center.

### PARTNERSHIPS AND COORDINATION

1. Seek partnerships in all aspects of implementation, including funding, operations, and programming.
2. Ensure that agreements with partners do not unduly limit community access to the facility.
3. Coordinate with City of Minneapolis on redevelopment of the block east of the YMCA as a mixed-use development that could include district parking available to park users.

### DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

4. Design of all facilities should be welcoming to the north side community and create the feeling that local neighbors are welcome in these spaces. Local artists, designers, and craftspeople could contribute to making the design welcoming.
5. Minimize tree removal, especially of significant overstory trees, through careful design and detailing.
6. Protect trees during construction, to ensure they are not negatively impacted by construction activities, in consultation with MPRB's Forestry Department.
7. Replace any trees removed as a result of construction with an equivalent or greater caliper inch total of trees, in coordination with MPRB's Forestry Department.
8. Consult with the north side community and residents around the park on schematic and detailed design of park elements.
9. Seek to minimize visual impact of facilities on nearby homes through vegetation, depressing facilities down into the earth, and/or high quality façade design.
10. Reduce or eliminate community impact by constructing replacement facilities prior to decommissioning older facilities, or by creating partnerships to provide space for these activities. This is especially true for baseball and for the recreation center itself.

### PROGRAMMING AND ACCESS

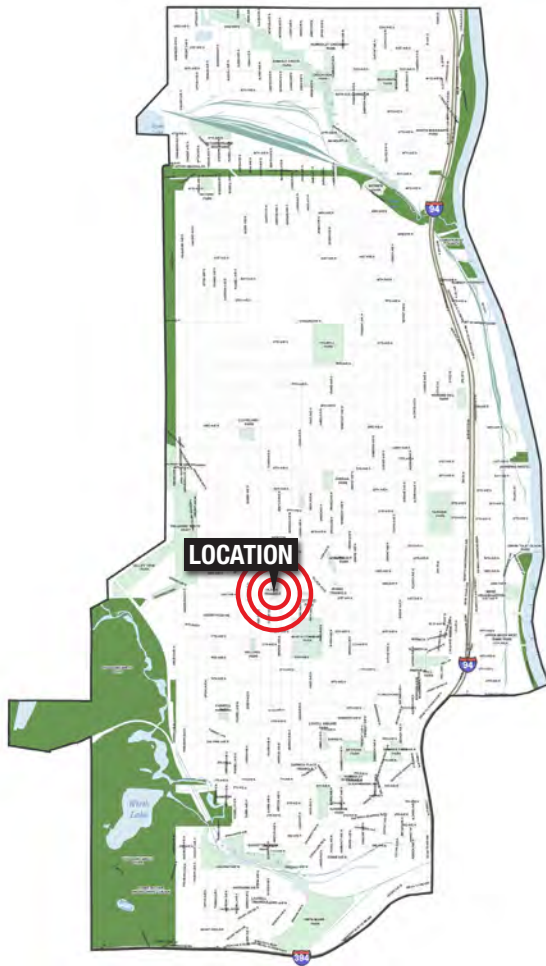
11. Facilities should prioritize access by the north side community.
12. Access to facilities should be affordable to north side residents.
13. Decisions around access, hours, and fees should be made through a community-engaged process, in consultation with park users and potential park users.
14. Programming should be tailored to what people want to do in the park.

### OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

15. Maintenance and program staffing should be adequate to operate this larger facility and the site around it, and should be determined through careful analysis of real staffing needs.
16. Repairs should be undertaken quickly, to ensure the park does not enter the "vicious cycle" of neglect, which can then invite further damage and vandalism.
17. Facility leadership and staff should reflect the north side community, in all its racial and cultural diversity.

# OLIVER

# TRIANGLE



## LOCATION AND HISTORY

Oliver Triangle is located at the intersection of Oliver Avenue and North 21st Avenue just west of Broadway Avenue. The triangle was donated to the park board when it was dedicated as park land in the plat of Forest Heights in 1883 along with Cottage Park, Glen Gale and Irving Triangle. The park board requested control of the property from the city council in 1892. The triangle took the name of Oliver Avenue, which was named for Deacon Oliver, a pioneer who platted his claim to this section of north Minneapolis. Initial improvements to the triangle were made in 1895 and additional work was done in the park in 1909, though it is unclear exactly what was done.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS AND CHARACTER

Oliver Triangle is somewhat unusual in that it is not bounded completely by streets. The southern property line is shared with a single family residence. One large tree grows from the property and sidewalks flank the street frontages.

## THE PROPOSED DESIGN

The design for Oliver Triangle creates a small neighborhood landmark on the corner. A new sidewalk along the southern property line better defines the property edge and allows easier access between 21st and Oliver. Between this triangle of walks is an area naturalized for habitat and an area reserved for a public art installation.

The art might include habitat elements within it or provide options for climbable art, as a sort-of micro play area. Or perhaps it could be cleverly and artistically designed seating, so people can gather in the shade during walks in the neighborhood.

## CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PARKS

No connections are proposed between Oliver Triangle and other parks.

## KNOWN LAND USE AND COORDINATION ISSUES

No known land use or coordination issues exist with Oliver Triangle



**EXISTING CONDITIONS: OLIVER TRIANGLE**



**PROPOSED PLAN: OLIVER TRIANGLE**

## PROCESSES

	<b>1: General Input Spring-Fall 2017</b> <i>Input themes prior to initial concepts</i>	<b>2: Initial Concepts Winter 2018</b> <i>Input themes on initial concepts</i>	<b>3: The Preferred Concept Now</b> <i>Key elements of the concept</i>
aquatics	no comments	no comments	No aquatic facilities planned for this park
play	no comments	no comments	No play facilities planned for this park
athletics	no comments	no comments	No athletic facilities planned for this park
courts	no comments	no comments	No court facilities planned for this park
winter	no comments	no comments	No winter activities planned for this park
landscape	no comments	Prefer landscaped areas rather than orchard, because of concern of mess	Small naturalized area
other	no comments	no comments	New sidewalk across southern end of park Opportunity for public art

## COST ESTIMATE

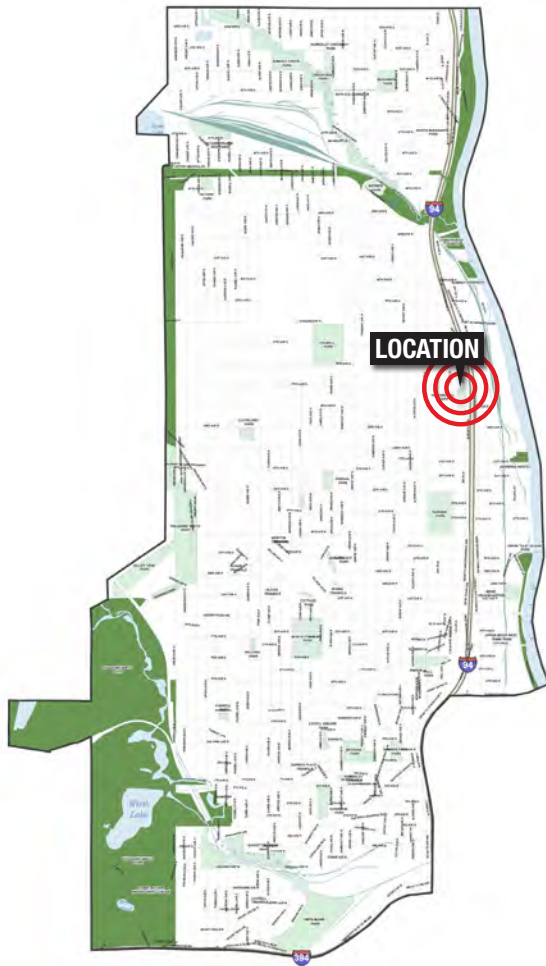
Park Name	Asset Type	Project	2019 ESTIMATED COST/PROJECT	NOTES
Oliver Triangle	Landscape	Naturalized areas	\$ 712	
Oliver Triangle	Other	Public Art	\$ -	Implemented in collaboration with City and non-profit groups
Oliver Triangle	Other	Renovate walking paths	\$ 21,262	
Oliver Triangle	Other	Miscl. signs, trees, furniture	\$ 439	
Oliver Triangle	TOTAL		\$ 22,413	

## OPERATIONS ESTIMATE

There is estimated to be no operational changes for this park.



# PERKINS HILL PARK



## LOCATION AND HISTORY

Perkins Hill Park is located in the central portion of the north side, nestled up against the I-94 freeway sound wall. The five-and-a-half-acre park was acquired in 1948. All but two lots of the park were acquired from the state at no cost. The two additional lots were purchased. The state had obtained the property through tax forfeiture. The park's name comes from the Perkins Hill Addition (the official name of the housing development that created the neighborhood in this area) in which most of the park is located, though the name has never been formally adopted.

A 1944 study of the city's park needs suggested a playground in this area. After acquiring the land, the park board promptly vacated 3rd Street which ran through the park and graded the north end of the property for a ball field. The park was intended primarily as a playground for small children. Improvements were completed in 1949 with the installation of backstops for the ball fields and playground equipment and the seeding of the park.

Perkins Hill Park shrank in 1969 when 1.8 acres of the park were taken by the state highway department for the construction of I-94 through north Minneapolis. The money paid by the state was split between a fund to improve the park and an account to purchase other land for parks in the city. Plans to renovate the remaining acres of

the park were approved in 1970 and commenced that year. The park was given a makeover in 1990-91 and new playground equipment was installed in 2010.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS AND CHARACTER

The creation of the freeway and the fact that Perkins Hill doesn't occupy a full block—instead facing an alley to the west—makes this park quite secluded and unknown. The CityView School is immediately to the south, and its primary entrances and recreational areas face away from the park, so there is less spill-over of use here from the school than at other parks. In all only one home actually faces the park, from across 35th Avenue to the north.

The park features a play area at its northern end and a basketball court in its southern third. Beyond that, recreational options are limited to a large and sprawling picnic area that covers most of the east-facing slope that descends from the alley to the freeway wall. Trees have been planted throughout this sloping area, but they are young and provide little shade. A trail connects through the park from north to south, linking the school to park amenities. Overall the park has great potential, though it is hidden. Activating the space with unique amenities to give people a reason to come could be a great benefit to Perkins Hill.



**BASKETBALL**

**PLAYGROUND**

**EXISTING CONDITIONS: PERKINS HILL PARK**



**PROPOSED PLAN: PERKINS HILL PARK**

## PROCESSES

	<b>1: General Input Spring-Fall 2017</b> <i>Input themes prior to initial concepts</i>	<b>2: Initial Concepts Winter 2018</b> <i>Input themes on initial concepts</i>	<b>3: The Preferred Concept Now</b> <i>Key elements of the concept</i>
aquatics	Multiple suggestions for pool or splash pad →	Support for splash pad →	New Splash pad near playground
play	Play area generally liked Suggest replacing sand with wood chips →	Suggestion for shelter/shade structure at playground →	Improved play area in same general location
athletics	no comments →	no comments →	No athletic facilities planned for this park
courts	Basketball court well liked, but needs upgrade and could be larger →	Suggestion for 2nd basketball court →	Improved and enlarged basketball court in same general location
winter	no comments →	no comments →	No formal winter activities planned for this park
landscape	Mixed opinion on importance/quality of green space →	no comments →	Possibility for naturalized areas in conjunction with bike park
other	Bathrooms / port-a-potty needed →	Mixed opinions on urban agriculture; concern it might not succeed here. →	New group gathering/picnic shelter near playground, with opportunity for portable toilet enclosure  Urban agriculture area with orchard and community gardens  New mountain bike/BMX park winding through park, utilizing hillside. Could create a draw to this park and make it more active.

## COST ESTIMATE

Asset Type	Project	2019 ESTIMATED COST/PROJECT
Aquatics	Small splash pad	\$ 759,350
Play	Traditional Play Structure in existing container	\$ 806,809
Courts	Basketball Court (1)	\$ 123,394
Landscape	Naturalized areas	\$ 6,644
Landscape	Urban Agriculture Area	\$ 43,367
Other	Bicycle Training Track	\$ 47,459
Other	Group picnic shelter	\$ 104,411
Other	Renovate walking paths	\$ 192,875
Other	Artwork on freeway wall	\$ -
Other	Misc. signs, trees, furniture	\$ 41,686
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 2,125,995</b>

Note: Urban Agriculture Areas will be implemented in partnership with specific programs or community members. Estimate includes water service.

Note: Public Art will be implemented in collaboration with City and non-profit groups.

## THE PROPOSED DESIGN

The design for Perkins Hill capitalizes on the park's hillside topography and secluded setting to introduce several new amenities meant to attract new users. The play areas are retained in their same general location, but are now joined by a splash pad or spray-jet plaza, to introduce an aquatic play feature into a neighborhood that lacks this amenity. Near the play area is a new open air picnic shelter that could also provide space for a portable toilet enclosure. Picnicking is clustered around this new shelter rather than being scattered throughout the site. A new walking loop extends through the park, allowing for a peaceful stroll up and down the hill. The basketball court is retained in its current location.

Winding throughout the southern two-thirds of the park is a bicycle training track. This natural surface and/or paved loop or area is designed for beginning mountain bikers or BMX riders and could include small jumps, rocks and logs, wooden catwalks, and other fun tricks and challenges. The training track climbs up and down the hill and winds amongst several new natural features, including small berms and a rain garden for treating stormwater and bringing habitat benefit into the park.

The sound wall facing the park is envisioned as a canvas for public art, perhaps by local muralists. In the northeastern corner of the park, a small community garden area and community orchard will encourage regular use by dedicated individuals, bringing more eyes into the park.

The alley that fronts the park to the west is rebuilt as a green alley, with new vegetation and stormwater management techniques. This will create a more verdant, aesthetically pleasing frontage to the park. Perkins Hill Park needs more people doing exciting, fun, positive activities in the park. The proposed design will bring exactly that, by increasing the reasons for people to come to Perkins Hill.

### CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PARKS

Connections to Perkins Hill are especially important, to encourage increased use of the new amenities. A proposed pedestrian and bicycle connection to Folwell Park follows 35th Avenue, 4th Avenue, and 37th Avenue. A portion of this route could also connect, using Lyndale Avenue and Dowling Avenue, to the Upper Harbor Terminal, where complementary amenities are proposed.

### KNOWN LAND USE AND COORDINATION ISSUES

Implementation of the green alley will require coordination with the City of Minneapolis and possibly nonprofit partners.

## OPERATIONS ESTIMATE

PERKINS HILL				
FACILITIES	Total Per Unit Operations Cost	△ Qty	△ Cost	
Splash Pad	\$ 35,000	1	\$	35,000
Bicycle Facility/Training Track	\$ 5,000	1	\$	5,000
Group Shelter	\$ 4,000	1	\$	4,000
Urban Agriculture	\$ 15,000	1	\$	15,000
Difference				\$ 59,000