Focus Area
Recommendations
Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska
Nine areas around the two lakes received focused study during the master planning process. Each area had unique characteristics, issues, and opportunities. In addition to developing overall recommendations for both Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska and Lake Harriet, the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) developed recommendations and preferred concepts for each of the nine focus areas.

Two schematic plans, one emphasizing recreation, the other ecology, were created for each focus area. These eighteen plans were presented and discussed over the course of two CAC meetings, an open house, and at meetings with MPRB staff. An online survey polled the public regarding preferences. Using this feedback about the schematic plans, a preferred concept plan with recommendations describing projects was developed for each focus area. These illustrative plans and associated recommendations were discussed and approved by the CAC at its final three meetings in 2016.

Two chapters of the master plan are dedicated to the nine focus areas. The first chapter includes the six Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska focus areas and the second, the three Harriet focus areas. Each focus area includes a description of existing conditions, a list of issues and opportunities, and highlights of the master plan recommendations. A graphic “dashboard” for each focus area summarizes public comment. An illustrative, annotated plan with a numbered list of recommendations and photographs provide a vision for the proposed actions and projects.

The nine areas identified and studied during the master plan process are as follows:

1. Northeast Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska
2. North Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska
3. Northwest Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska
4. Southwest Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska
5. East Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska
6. South Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska and William Berry
7. Bandshell Area – Lake Harriet
8. Lower Road – Lake Harriet
9. Lyndale Gardens – Lake Harriet
Dashboard Explanation for the Nine Focus Areas

Title of focus area and brief sentence of what we learned from community engagement

Blue icons reflect favorable comments from the public about ideas for the focus areas

Online survey results

Community preference between the two schematic options for the focus area

Big Moves for the Preferred Concept

Red icons reflect unfavorable comments from the public about ideas for the focus areas

Focus Area Recommendations: Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

Increase and improve amenities such as restrooms, seating, interpretive, and beacon

Preferred location for a new bridge, prioritizing connections over aesthetics

Continue partnership with County and other agencies to work towards reducing traffic on W. Lake Street

Preferred location for a new bridge, prioritizing connections over aesthetics

Differing preferences between locating a visitor center within the plan area or at the NW Calhoun area

Strong prevailing wind patterns could create unfavorable conditions for launching boats at north Calhoun

Differing preferences between locating a visitor center within the plan area or at the NW Calhoun area

Strong prevailing wind patterns could create unfavorable conditions for launching boats at north Calhoun

Cost for constructing a land bridge could compete within budget for other immediate projects or objectives among chains of lakes

Differing preferences between locating a visitor center within the plan area or at the NW Calhoun area

Strong prevailing wind patterns could create unfavorable conditions for launching boats at north Calhoun

Increase and improve amenities such as restrooms, seating, interpretive, and beacon

Preferred location for a new bridge, prioritizing connections over aesthetics

Continue partnership with County and other agencies to work towards reducing traffic on W. Lake Street
Existing Conditions
Northeast Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska is one of the major entry points and an uncelebrated gateway into the Chain of Lakes Regional Park. With its proximity to Uptown and location at the intersection of West Lake Street and East Calhoun Parkway, NE Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska is one of the two busiest activity hubs around the lakes. Many enjoy the synergy of the enterprises and activities that attract so many visitors to this corner. Others, including CAC members, expressed concern that the area has become too congested and unsafe.

As the site for Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska’s only boat launch, only concessions (Tin Fish Restaurant and Wheel Fun rentals) and sailing school, NE Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska is further congested in summer months by the thousands of pedestrians and cyclists passing through the area. The boat launch turnaround area is especially obstructed by Aquatic Invasive Species inspections, sailors rigging boats, multiple daily deliveries and garbage collection from Tin Fish, handicapped parking, and parents dropping off and picking up their children who are attending Sailing School.

Recreational activities conflict with weed harvester operations.
Congested and limited space for bicyclists and pedestrians under Lake Ave. bridge.
Existing facilities (sailing club shown) are in need of improvements.
Focus Area Recommendations: Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

Aerial view of the NE Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska Focus Area

Photo Credit: Google

Issues and Opportunities:

• The area has great energy but is too crowded. Move some of the uses to less congested parts of the lakes while retaining the synergy of the space.

• The intersection of the bicycle and pedestrian paths and the boat launch driveway is dangerous. Redesign the space to keep vehicles out of this area.

• Defined cow paths show the desire to have an at-grade crossing of West Lake Street, to connect with Lake of the Isles.

• The intersection of bicycles and pedestrians trails to reach the bridge underpass is problematic.

• Speeding bicycles entering this congested area are dangerous.

• Bicycle parking and restrooms are inadequate.

• The WWI Naval memorial is in need of restoration.

• Pedestrians who are not customers of Tin Fish lack opportunities to access the water.

• The sailing school needs larger and improved facilities including a safer drop-off area for students.

• Facilities are not accessible and do not provide the quality or level of services expected for a park as popular as Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska or as renowned as the Chain of Lakes.

• Many visitors to the lakes park in adjacent neighborhoods. Many local residents feel additional programming will result in more parking pressure on neighborhood streets.
Highlights of the Master Plan Recommendations

A major effort of the master plan was to de-congest the NE corner of Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska without sacrificing the area’s synergy and character. Recommendations included re-aligning trails and moving some of the area’s current uses to the north and northwest shores of the lake. Because of the costs of constructing these new facilities elsewhere on the lake, implementation of the recommendations for NE Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska must be phased:

• In an early phase, both boat launches are relocated to the North Beach parking lot. This includes related AIS inspections and weed harvesting operations. The Sailing School and Club remain in place near the Calhoun Refectory (Tin Fish).

• In subsequent phases, when funds are available for infrastructure improvements at the NE corner - such as re-aligning West Calhoun Parkway to create recreational space along the shore of the lake – the boat launch, the Sailing School/Club, and related activities are relocated to the northwest shore of the lake.

• Once the launch and sailing school/club are relocated away from NE Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska, the area can be reorganized and enhanced for concessions and other visitor needs, such as new restroom facilities. Equipment rentals (currently Wheel Fun) will be relocated to the south side of the Calhoun Refectory (currently Tin Fish). Boardwalks and docks provide seating and access to the waterfront that can be enjoyed by all.

In the interim and until funding is available, to improve the safety for those enjoying as well as passing through the area, trail improvements can be constructed. The master plan recommends an at-grade multi-use trail across Lake Street on
the west side of East Calhoun Parkway. This new trail segment would allow the elimination of the two-way bicycle trail under the bridge and would resolve the tight turns and problematic intersection of the bicycle and pedestrian trail on the east side of the bridge. The new trail segment would also relocate bicycle traffic coming from Lake of the Isles, the Midtown Greenway, and the clockwise trails around Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska to the perimeter of the area. By routing traffic to the perimeter, the number of points where bicycle and pedestrian trails cross would be reduced.

Two other studies impacting the NE corner occurred as the master plan was being written: the Calhoun Refectory Facility and Grounds Study and the Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska-Harriet Trail Improvements project. Images explaining these two studies can be found in the Appendix.
The width of the combined bicycle-pedestrian trail on the south side of the Lake Street bridge over the channel is substandard for peak use periods.

The Calhoun Refectory (Tin Fish) is a very popular destination. Restroom facilities currently do not meet ADA standards or have the capacity to meet the high demand.
NE Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska Focus Area Recommendations:

1. Reduce congestion and improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists while preserving the energy and character of the area.
2. Remove and relocate away from this area the two boat launches currently flanking the Calhoun Refectory (currently Tin Fish).
3. Relocate the sailing school and yacht club away from this area once the northwest corner is developed as a recreational hub. Retain the dock and busy field.
4. Relocate rental concessionaire (currently Wheel Fun) to south side of the Calhoun Refectory when the sailing school and yacht club are relocated.
5. Construct an all-gender restroom and storage building.
6. Replace the bicycle trail under the Lake Street Bridge and along the lagoon with an at grade, shared-use trail on the west side of the intersection of Lake Street and East Calhoun Parkway.
7. Create a gateway or enhancements in the triangle between eastbound and westbound Lake Street.
8. Replace the turnaround at the existing boat launch with a curbside drop-off area that includes designated spaces for deliveries and accessible parking.
9. Restore historic objects and structures (WPA wall along the lagoon, Naval and Marine Corps Memorial Tablets and the World War I Memorial Mast).
10. Improve waterfront access for pedestrians.

LEGEND:
- EVIDENCE MARKERS
- BICYCLE TRAIL
- WETLAND
- BEACH
- PRAIRIE / MEADOW
- POLLINATOR GARDEN
- UPLAND FOREST / EXISTING TREE GROWTH
- STORMWATER PONDS
- RESTORED NATIVE VEGETATION

NE Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska Focus Area Recommendations:

1. Reduce congestion and improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists while preserving the energy and character of the area.
2. Remove and relocate away from this area the two boat launches currently flanking the Calhoun Refectory (currently Tin Fish).
3. Relocate the sailing school and yacht club away from this area once the northwest corner is developed as a recreational hub. Retain the dock and busy field.
4. Relocate rental concessionaire (currently Wheel Fun) to south side of the Calhoun Refectory when the sailing school and yacht club are relocated.
5. Construct an all-gender restroom and storage building.
6. Replace the bicycle trail under the Lake Street Bridge and along the lagoon with an at grade, shared-use trail on the west side of the intersection of Lake Street and East Calhoun Parkway.
7. Create a gateway or enhancements in the triangle between eastbound and westbound Lake Street.
8. Replace the turnaround at the existing boat launch with a curbside drop-off area that includes designated spaces for deliveries and accessible parking.
9. Restore historic objects and structures (WPA wall along the lagoon, Naval and Marine Corps Memorial Tablets and the World War I Memorial Mast).
10. Improve waterfront access for pedestrians.
Improved Calhoun Refectory with upgraded storage, concessions, and seating areas.

Resolved conflicts between recreational activities and weed harvester operational functions.

Restored shoreline edges with appropriate habitat and management strategies.

Improved access to shoreline edge with areas for contemplation, seating, and green spaces.

New restroom, changing rooms, and storage facility with possible viewing opportunities.
Focus Area Recommendations:
Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

- New rental/storage facilities with easy access to water’s edge.
- Improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities along Lake Street including a green boulevard and pedestrian refuge zones.
Existing Conditions
West Lake Street, carrying 30,000 vehicles a day, is a major barrier dividing the north end of Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska from Lake of the Isles. Until the 1990’s, when the Midtown Greenway was constructed, elevated railroad tracks formed a second barrier between the two lakes. Today the Midtown Greenway provides a major east-west trail through the City for bicyclists and pedestrians. Ramps off the Greenway at East Calhoun Parkway and at Dean Parkway allow users to access the trails around Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska and Harriet. However, W Lake Street remains a formidable crossing and numerous studies have proposed bridges of various widths for bicycles and pedestrians, none of which have been built.

North Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska’s major recreational features include separated bicycle and pedestrian trails, North Beach, a small playground, and a parking lot. All the facilities are aging. The east end of the north shore of Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska has steep slopes which are retained by stone and concrete walls built in the 1940s by the Work Progress Administration, a New Deal agency which employed millions of workers during the Great Depression. These walls have stood for over 75 years, but are in need of major restoration. Another historic feature of North Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska is the Lake Street bridge built over the channel to Lake of the Isles in 1911. The bridge, while iconic, is a major pinch point for trail traffic.
The North Beach and parking lot to the east are popular with windsurfers and paddleboarders. The parking lot is aging and poorly lit.

Across W Lake Street from Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska at Thomas Avenue (midpoint along the north shoreline) is the Calhoun Beach Club and a new residential building recently constructed by Greystar Development. The area around north Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska has proved popular for redevelopment proposals, although neighbors have resisted high-rise buildings.

**Issues and Opportunities:**

- Crossing W Lake Street at Dean Parkway, Thomas Avenue and East Calhoun Parkway is difficult and dangerous!
- Cedar Isles Dean Neighborhood Association (CIDNA) has proposed a tunnel and ramps under the Midtown Greenway east of Thomas Avenue
- Lighting is insufficient for the parking lot.
- The parking lot is aging and should be rebuilt with stormwater Best Practice Management (BMP) techniques.
- A steep eroded cow path on the west side of the bridge is unsightly.
- The WPA wall along the shore is badly deteriorated.
- The allee of cottonwoods is valued by the community who would like them replanted as the mature trees die out.
- Paddleboarders and windsurfers have protested the proposed the relocation of the boat launch to the north parking lot because it would make launching their craft more difficult and because they would have to compete with fishermen and boat trailers for parking spaces.
One of the “big ideas” that captured the imagination of the public during the 2012 Charrette for North Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska and South Lake of the Isles and during the Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska-Harriet Master Plan was the proposal to build a “Lid” over W. Lake Street. The “Lid”, a 300 foot wide bridge would span eight lanes of traffic and provide uninterrupted parkland between Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska and Lake of the Isles. To reduce the steepness of the trails on the Lid and over Lake Street, the roadbed would have to be lowered. The Lid could incorporate other facilities such as a visitor’s center and/or parking. Its construction would require cooperative efforts between Hennepin County and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. Defined as a long-term priority by the CAC, the Lid is perhaps one of the most visionary ideas of the Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska Harriet Master Plan.

Another major recommendation for North Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska and one that is also dependent upon Hennepin County, is to create more space for trails along W Lake Street by eliminating one lane of eastbound traffic between Thomas Avenue and East Calhoun Parkway. West of Thomas, this right lane is designated as a bus and right turn lane. Because W Lake St is a Hennepin County road and one of the busiest thoroughfares in the state, any modifications within the right-of-way would be designed and controlled by the County. Removing the eastbound right lane would provide space for wider trails on the south side of the bridge over the channel, relieving congestion at this pinch point.

The east end of the removed lane could be converted to a right turn lane onto East Calhoun Parkway. Initially this change would be accomplished with barriers and re-striping. Eventually, the change would be made more permanent with new curbs and storm sewer inlet modifications.
The congestion at NE Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska impacts plans for North Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska focus area. Until the capital investment can be found to realign W Calhoun Parkway, at which time Sailing School and Club can be relocated to Northwest Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska, the master plan recommends easing congestion at NE Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska by relocating the boat launches that flank the Refectory (Tin Fish) to North Calhoun. The water is deep enough out from midpoint of the existing parking lot, to accommodate the keels of most sail boats that currently use the lake. All boat launch activities on Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska - including public launching, AIS inspections, weed harvesting and emergency access - would be moved to the north launch. The North Beach parking lot location for the boat launch is very unpopular with the windsurfers and paddleboard enthusiasts The lake bottom along the north edge may also pose some launching limitations for the deeper keeled sailboats and may require a regulatory change in the size of boats allowed to launch there.
A new land bridge over Lake Street will provide a safer connection between Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska and Lake of the Isles.

A new land bridge will also provide a unique open space experience and remarkable views of the lake and downtown.
**NORTH CALHOUN/BDE MAKA SKA FOCUS AREA**

1. Align improvements with the recommendations of the West Lake Multimodal Transportation Study and continue to work with other agencies to improve the safety and comfort of pedestrian and bicycle crossings of Lake Street at Dean Parkway, Thomas Avenue, and East Calhoun Parkway.

2. Improve the connection between Lake of the Isles and Lake Calhoun with a land bridge over Lake Street between Thomas Avenue and the lagoon. In the short term, support plans to create the tunnel under and ramps to the Midtown Greenway east of Thomas Avenue.

3. Until the northwest hub can be developed, create a boat launch and supporting infrastructure for public launching, emergency boat access, and MPRB’s environmental stewardship operations.

4. Improve North Beach facilities. Add restrooms, changing facilities, and picnic opportunities (including non-reservable small shelters).

5. Improve the north parking lot through stormwater treatment and added lighting (per MPRB standards).

**Recommendations:**

- Create boat launch and supporting infrastructure for public launching, emergency boat access, and MPRB’s environmental stewardship operations.
- Improve the connection between Lake of the Isles and Lake Calhoun with a land bridge over Lake Street between Thomas Avenue and the lagoon. In the short term, support plans to create the tunnel under and ramps to the Midtown Greenway east of Thomas Avenue.
- Improve North Beach facilities. Add restrooms, changing facilities, and picnic opportunities (including non-reservable small shelters).
- Improve the north parking lot through stormwater treatment and added lighting (per MPRB standards).
The green “Lid” over W Lake Street would connect Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska to Lake of the Isles and would bridge a major barrier within the Chain of Lakes. The new boat launch and dock is shown on the left.
Focus Area Recommendations: Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

Improved shoreline edge with pedestrian amenities and natural habitat.

Improved beach facilities.
NW CALHOUN/BDE MAKAL SKA FOCUS AREA

Existing Conditions
Northwest Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska abuts the West Calhoun Neighborhood and a thriving commercial center north of Excelsior Boulevard. Multi-story condominiums, apartment buildings and townhouses front 32nd Street and the parkway along the west edge of the park. The heavily traveled Excelsior Boulevard is a barrier to easy access into the park.

NW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska, once a wetland, was filled in the early 1900's to create recreational space when Theodore Wirth was superintendent of the Minneapolis park system. Because of this, soils are structurally poor and prone to flooding when lake levels are high.

West Calhoun Parkway, with two-way traffic, is close to the lake in this area, with the separated bicycle and pedestrian trails squeezed between the parkway and the lake. The shoreline is relatively steep and stabilized with riprap. Two large storm sewers empty into the lake in this area.

The entire parkland west of the parkway is mowed. A baseball diamond and large adjacent treeless lawn are the only recreational amenities. NW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska provides one of the largest parking reservoirs for the Chain of Lakes in the form of a surface lot shared with the Calhoun Executive Center, a privately owned office building. However, given that the lot may be perceived by the public as a private parking lot and that it is located some distance from park amenities and destinations, many visitors are either not aware of its existence or find the distance to be undesirable.

The ballfield is permitted by the MPRB. In recent years the open space beyond has been used for lacrosse and volleyball tournaments as well as pick-up soccer games. Although it is a great space for recreation, this area is prone to flooding and needs drainage improvements.
Use of the ballfield is permitted by the MPRB. In recent years, the green lawn adjacent to the field has been used for lacrosse tournaments and soccer games.

The green space at this corner of the lake is the only parkland for West Calhoun Neighborhood residents. Despite the area’s inclusion in the Chain of Lakes Regional Park, many locals feel it is their neighborhood park. They currently use the large open space for summer movies and would like associated amenities such as walking trails, benches, and picnic facilities. Other organizations use the open space for programs and events, too. For example, the Loppet Foundation, a cross-country ski race and training organization, stages races from the parking lot and lawn. Many summer races and walks also stage in this area. All need a wide, uninterrupted corridor down to the trails and lake.

**Issues and Opportunities**
- The area has poor soils and floods frequently. An MPRB storm sewer pipe has failed, resulting in wet conditions.
- The location of the parkway and trails results in a large amount of impervious surface close to the water’s edge. Trails are squeezed between the riprap shoreline and the parkway and there is little recreational space along the lake.
- Many of the boulevard trees are ash and are expected to succumb to Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). MPRB Forestry has an ash tree replacement program, providing an opportunity to coordinate planting in areas that won’t be affected by future construction.
- This area holds the largest undeveloped open space and largest reservoir of parking around Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska and the Chain of Lakes Regional Park.
- The future West Lake Station of the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) will bring more visitors to the lake through this corridor. Improved bicycle and pedestrian connections between the station, the Midtown Greenway, and park are important to consider.
- West Calhoun Neighborhood uses the open space in the absence of a neighborhood park.
- The current owner of the adjacent Calhoun Executive Center, the Ackerberg Group, may be selling it.
Highlights of the Master Plan Recommendations
Building out the plan for NW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska will be crucial in easing congestion and improving safety at other areas of the lake.

Recommendations to reduce congestion at NE Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska are to relocate the boat launch, sailing school and club to NW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska. This move will require realignment of the parkway in this area west of its current location, in order to create the space needed for a building and parking associated with the launch and school. The poor soils of the area and the utilities required for a building will be costly. Ultimately, a grid of sailboat buoys will be located in this area of the lake.

The sailing school and sailing club building would incorporate at a minimum a storm shelter, restrooms, indoor classrooms, and storage. The building may also be designed to include other uses. Some CAC members suggested that the building might also be an interpretive center and that the area could be a launch site for canoes crossing the lake to Heyata Otunwe (Village to the Side) at the southeastern shore of Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska. Others suggested that the northwest shore would be an excellent location for a visitor’s center for the Chain of Lakes Regional Park with its proximity to parking and to the future West Lake Station, anticipated to become a major entry point into the Chain of Lakes Regional Park. Regardless, this area of Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska stands out as an ideal spot for welcoming regional visitors to the Chain of Lakes.

Fluctuating lake levels, which will occur more frequently as the climate warms, will affect the usability of NW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska. The master plan recommends reducing the size of central lawn while elevating it to create flood and stormwater storage beneath. Low areas around the perimeter of the space provide additional stormwater storage. The master plan also proposes a boardwalk along the shore of NW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska, to make up for limited land for trails in this area. In addition to serving as a trail surface, the boardwalk will be designed as a BMP, to detain stormwater by trapping litter before it can enter the lake and to enhance littoral habitat.

A wide promenade, hugging the edge of the parking lot along the northeastern edge of park property, is recommended to connect the commercial center and the Midtown Greenway directly to the trails around Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska. This master plan sets the stage for possible private/public cooperative redevelopment of the lot into a ramp that also provides at-grade retail, concessions or services for park users. The promenade itself could be used for events such as races, food trucks, and other recreational amenities.

NW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska provides a unique opportunity around the lakes to provide three major amenities related to picnicking that were highly desired by communities of color: parking, picnic facilities, and a large open space for field games such as lacrosse and soccer. Benches and picnic facilities are suggested around the edge of the green space and the central lawn. Smaller shelters, available on a first come-first served basis rather than by reservation, were preferred by the neighborhood and CAC. Grills and movable picnic tables to accommodate larger family gatherings were also favored by the public, though these kinds of amenities pose challenges for MPRB maintenance staff.

The West Lake Multimodal Transportation Study recommends a pedestrian and bicycle route along 32nd Street to West Calhoun Parkway. Modifications will be needed to the parkway intersection to slow vehicular traffic and give priority to pedestrian and bicycle movement.
Focus Area Recommendations: Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

Dashboard of Public Input

NW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

Respondents support integrating recreational activities and relocating current amenities from NE Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska. Respondents also indicated support for an approach that embraces ecological stewardship. New facilities should feature integrated natural stormwater management techniques and shoreline restoration strategies.

Online survey results

Ecology 49%
Recreation 51%

- Respondents agree on including a strong connection to future West Lake Street LRT Station
- Emergency access in this area is preferred due to proximity to fire station
- Preference to align potential development opportunities that maximize benefits for park uses
- Improve flooding problems and poor drainage using natural stormwater techniques to improve water quality
- The West Calhoun Neighborhood Council supports improving the park but would rather not relocate the boat launch, sailing school, or add a skate park
- The wind surfing community has commented that this area provides the best conditions for launching
- The sailing school has expressed an interest in relocating to the NW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska area
- Preference to making minor adjustments to the parkway alignment in order to accommodate park facilities
- Some respondents from the public have expressed an interest in including a skate park
- Residents from the 3200 West Calhoun Parkway Condominium Association have expressed their preference to hold relocating the sailing school and boat launch to the NW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska
- Include a staging area for the yearly winter Loppet ski festival
West Calhoun Neighborhood regards the green space as its neighborhood park, however, it lacks amenities.

The parkway location limits recreation space and natural habitat along the lake shore. Ramps to the trails do not meet accessibility standards.
NW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska Focus Area Recommendations:

1. In any discussions of future redevelopment of adjoining private property, ensure its alignment with the master plan. Advocate for benefits to the lake and park users, such as shared use parking and transit connections.

2. Realign a section of West Calhoun Parkway to increase recreational space along the lakeshore.

3. Create a lakeside building with restrooms and sufficient space for the sailing school and yacht club. The building may include a Chain of Lakes visitor center, concessions, meeting rooms and gathering spaces. Provide supporting facilities along the shore for the sailing school. Relocate buoy field as necessary.

4. Add a dock and an in-lake boardwalk along the shoreline where space for trails is limited. Restore riprap shoreline to native vegetation and incorporate features to improve water quality.

5. Provide a boat launch with related short-term parking, perhaps eliminating the launch on the north side of Calhoun. The launch and supporting infrastructure off the parking lot shall be sufficient for public launching, emergency access, and MPRB’s environmental stewardship operations.

6. Create a promenade from the terminus of Market Street at Excelsior Boulevard to West Lake Calhoun Parkway which could be used as a staging area for programming and events and which could integrate recreational amenities.

7. Consolidate and integrate drainage, flood storage, and treatment of on-site runoff.
New multi-functional building facility for the sailing school and sailing club, restroom/changing rooms, picnic shelter, and alternative location for a Chain of Lakes visitor center.

Provide flexible picnic and gathering spaces

Provide flexible open spaces for informal recreational activities.

Integrate multi-purpose infrastructure to improve water quality and responds to access and circulation needs.

Graphic depiction of improvements for the NW Calhoun/Hi-Maka Ska Focus Area. The CAC recommended a lower parking ramp structure with at grade services for park users as potential benefits for partnership opportunities.
Focus Area Recommendations:
Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

New facilities for the sailing school and sailing club programs, as well as boat launch access, drop-off, and parking.

Continue to support winter activities.
Chapter 8  FOCUS AREA RECOMMENDATIONS: Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

Integrate multi-purpose infrastructure to improve water quality and responds to access and circulation needs.

Graphic depiction of improvements for the NW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska Focus Area. Flexible open spaces and improved connection to West Lake are considered.
Focus Area Recommendations: Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

Infrastructure could include stormwater devices to capture floatables and other pollutants prior to being discharged to the lake.
Chapter 8  FOCUS AREA RECOMMENDATIONS: Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

Improve access to lake recreational activities.
Focus Area Recommendations: Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

- Improve facilities that adapt and respond to future climatic conditions.
SW CALHOUN/BDE MAKA SKA FOCUS AREA

Existing Conditions
Southwest Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska is one of the few areas around Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska and Harriet where homes border the parkway and are not separated by topography from the hustle and bustle of the lakes. Compared to the northern edges of the lake, SW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska has a quieter, more pastoral character, due in part to the amount of green space between the lake and the parkway.

West Calhoun Parkway separates a wetland complex from the recreational lands adjacent to the lake. In the 1990’s, as a result of efforts by the Clean Water Action Partnership, the southwestern corner of the park in this area was reclaimed for wetlands, resulting in a significant improvement in water quality of the lake.

Adjacent land uses on the west side of Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska include the Minikahda Club and Golf Course and Bakken Museum. These two properties, along with the wetland complex, are large parcels that reduce the number of access points from the west to Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska. Xerxes and Sheridan Avenues provide the most direct routes from the south. The five residential streets between them provide a reservoir of park visitor parking in Linden Hills neighborhood.

Many organizations use the existing parking lot and open space of SW Calhoun/Bde Maka to stage events year-round.
Focus Area Recommendations: Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

120

SW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska is home to Thomas Beach and a parking lot. Huge expanses of lawn between the bicycle and pedestrian trails are used frequently for event and race staging; tents and satellite toilets abound. In drier years, these lawns are popular for sunbathing and “hanging out”. A couple of sand volleyball courts and Thomas Beach are particularly popular with younger crowds. Thomas Beach has no concessions, changing facilities, restroom, or permanent storage space for lifeguards. The swimming area isn’t clearly defined here but lifeguards are on duty daily during the summer. SW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska is used by many for picnicking but has no shelters, picnic tables, or grills.

This 2014 aerial photo shows the wetland complex in the southwest corner of the lake which has been effective in improving water quality of the lake. Note the inundated recreational lawns rendered unusable by high water conditions.
Issues and Opportunities

• All of SW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska was a wetland prior to the early 1900s when it was filled for recreational use. Due to these structurally poor and flood-prone soils, the lawns are in poor condition and trails are susceptible to frost heave.

• SW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska is very valued recreational space, capable of supporting large groups of people and events.

• The topography is relatively level. It has a good quality beach and a parking lot. This location offers the best opportunity around Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska to provide accessible facilities and programs.

• The SW wetland complex has been effective in improving water quality. Continued monitoring and investment in these wetlands is critical to their success.

• Park police have expressed concerns about the safety of the trail intersection at the parking lot driveway. They also report that the Thomas Beach parking lot is prone to car break-ins and that better lighting is needed.

• Parking could be expanded in bays along the side of the parkway closest to the lake, but MPRB operations staff expressed concern that illegal activities such as drinking or drug use in the parked cars would be difficult to police.
Focus Area Recommendations: Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

Highlights of Master Plan Recommendations

An important recommendation for this area is to improve the recreational lawns by raising them, reducing them in size, and constructing flood water storage beneath. Shallow depressions around the perimeter could also collect stormwater. To maintain the popularity of the area as an informal recreation space, MPRB Forestry should continue its practice of strategically planting trees around the perimeter of the lawns.

Another major recommendation for this area is to make it more family friendly and accessible. The topography of SW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska, as well as its parking lot, make it suitable for a universal access playground and beach. A new building near the beach would provide plumbed restrooms for families, changing rooms, offices and needed storage for lifeguards, and perhaps concessions.

These amenities would allow MPRB Aquatics program to provide swimming lessons. Other added improvements include picnic facilities, including small shelters and tables with grills.

To make room for these added improvements near the beach, the parking lot is shifted away from the lake and closer to the parkway. As with all other lots reconstructed around the lakes, parking bays with porous pavers or reinforced turf, if not plowed in winter, should be used to reduce impervious pavement. Alongside, rain gardens could infiltrate and remove pollutants from runoff.

The pedestrian trail would be rerouted to the beach side of the parking lot, eliminating the current driveway crossing. The existing geometry of the bicycle trail crossing of the driveway would be improved.
Improving soil profiles would make the SW’s recreational lawns more resilient to heavy use.
**SOUTHWEST CALHOUN/BDE MAKA SKA FOCUS AREA**

**LAKE CALHOUN/HARRIET MASTER PLAN**

**MINNEAPOLIS PARK AND RECREATION BOARD**

**PERKINS+WILL TEAM**

**02-05-2016**

**SW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska Focus Area Recommendations:**

1. **Consolidate/integrate drainage, flood storage, and treatment of on-site runoff.** Improve the recreational lawn, making it resilient to water fluctuations and more better able to tolerate water fluctuations.

2. **Add universal access playground.**

3. **Add sidewalk connection.**

4. **Reconstruct the parking lot by moving it away from the lake, adding spaces, lighting, and incorporating stormwater treatment.** Minimize loss of usable park space when reconfiguring the parking lot.

5. **Add overlook opportunities.**

6. **Provide improved small and large picnic facilities to support gatherings of various sizes with nearby open lawn; relocate and expand volleyball courts.**

**Legend:**

- **Restored native vegetation**
- **Stormwater ponds**
- **Restored shoreline**
- **Beach**
- **Prairie / Meadow**
- **Pollinator garden**
- **Upland forest / existing tree growth**
- **Bicycle trail**
- **Pedestrian trail**
- **Planting beds**
- **Pavement**
- **Wetland**

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**Focus Area Concepts:**

- Add universal access playground.
- Relocate and expand volleyball courts.
- Improve beach amenities.
- Make Thomas Beach ADA accessible and improve amenities.
- Restore shoreline to reduce erosion and manage invasive species.
- Restore upland vegetation and increase width of vegetated buffers with native plantings.
- Add overlook opportunities.
- Improve picnic facilities.
- Make Thomas Beach ADA accessible and improve amenities.
- Open views and incorporate pollinator gardens and lawns.
- Add picnic pavilion, restroom and changing facility.
- Reconstruct the parking lot by moving it away from the lake, adding spaces, lighting, and incorporating stormwater treatment.
- South and west portions of the parking lot will have grass pavement for overflow parking and tree canopy in and around stalls. Lot will serve as staging for events.
- Consolidate/integrate drainage, flood storage, and treatment of on-site runoff. Improve the recreational lawn, so it is more usable and better able to tolerate water fluctuations.
- Add a building with a changing facility, restrooms, and with space for aquatics program.
- Provide improved small and large picnic facilities to support gatherings of various sizes with nearby open lawn; relocate and expand volleyball courts.
New universal playground facilities.

Improved volleyball amenities.

Improved flexible open lawn spaces for informal games and gatherings.

Improved shoreline restoration and enhance natural habitats.

Include facilities for universal lake and beach access.

Improve access to lake recreational activities.
Focus Area Recommendations: Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

Support lake activities and aquatic events with improved aquatics facilities.

Improve open space and staging areas to be more resilient to multi-purpose activities.
Existing Conditions
The East Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska focus area is defined in the north by the boat launch at the Calhoun Refectory and in the south by West 36th Street. Steep slopes separate the narrow band of mowed parklands along the lake from East Calhoun Parkway above. A few bur oak remain on the slopes, remnants of an oak savannah that existed before fire suppression and modern-day buckthorn infestations. These oak woodlands are highly valued by the community.

ECCO or East Calhoun Community Organization, regards the east shore of the lake as its neighborhood park. The narrow green space is dominated by one-way bicycle and pedestrian trails that run along its length. There are pockets of lawn for sunbathing and a few benches along the trails for people to sit and enjoy the views. Recreational amenities include a fishing pier at W 36th Street and a beach at W 32nd Street with a small play area designed for preschool children.

Access to the park from the adjacent ECCO neighborhood is an issue, as all landings and stairways on the west side of the parkway (32nd, 33rd, and between 33rd and 34th) are substandard and do not meet ADA standards for accessibility. These deficient access points are also used by non-local visitors who park on neighborhood streets to reach park facilities on the east and northeast side of Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska.

A mortared limestone wall built in 1939 by the WPA forms the eastern shore of the lake. The 4’ high wall was built to protect a 1,890-foot section of shoreline from erosion caused by the prevailing winds and wave action from the northwest. The wall is

WPA walls are in need of restoration. Steep slopes along the east edge limit access from adjacent neighborhoods.
Focus Area Recommendations: Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

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Aerial view of the E Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska Focus Area

considered a contributing element to the Grand Rounds Historic District Nomination, but most of it is in fair to poor condition. The wall will require total reconstruction to restore it, estimated in 2016 to cost $420,000.

A few storm sewer pipes draining watersheds to the east of the lake daylight on the shore of East Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska. A delta of sediments in the lake is visible on air photos, marking the outlet of a 36” diameter storm sewer pipe at 33rd Street.

Access by bicycle is challenging from the city’s on-street system along West 36th Street onto Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska’s one-way trail, in spite of the signalized intersection. Westbound cyclists using the bicycle lane on the south side of 36th must make three crossings to reach the park trail. They first cross a merge lane to a porkchop-shaped median, then traverse two lanes of traffic to reach the north side of the street. Finally cyclist cross the parkway to access the clockwise trails around the lake.
Issues and Opportunities

• Recreational opportunities in this focus area are limited by the narrow amount of parkland between steep slopes and the water’s edge.

• The WPA wall is a significant cultural resource and a contributing factor to the Grand Rounds Historic District Nomination, but is in poor condition.

• The beach is popular with the neighborhood. However, the play area is not ideal for older children (ages 5-12). Residents would like expanded play opportunities for their families.

• Where seating is available, it is anchored and not movable.

• Access from the east side of the East Calhoun Parkway is challenging. Parkway crossings, landings, and stairways are substandard and do not meet ADA standards for accessibility.

• Public sentiment is that the efforts to restore the oak woodlands on the steep slopes east of the trails have fallen short but should continue.

• Adult fitness equipment at stations along the trails was suggested as a way to expand recreation on this side of the lake.
Focus Area Recommendations: Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

Highlights of Master Plan Recommendations

The only major change recommended for this area is to convert a section of the pedestrian trail to boardwalk at the shoreline near 33rd Street and daylight the storm sewer behind it. The boardwalk would provide habitat and vary the trail experience around the lake. Understandably, this concept for this particular location will require thorough vetting and coordination with the City of Minneapolis and MPRB Environmental Stewardship.

Other important recommendations include improving access from the neighborhood and revamping the parkway crossings. Only one ramp currently exists between 33rd and 34th; a second is proposed at W 32nd Street near the beach. Construction of these improvements should avoid mature bur oak on the slopes. Because of the steep slopes and to minimize disturbance, elevated boardwalks may be preferable to constructing at-grade walks and retaining walls.

To provide recreational opportunities to a wider range of users, this plan recommends adding adult exercise stations around the lake and reconstructing the playground at the beach to include nature play opportunities for all, including older children.

The master plan recommends a redesign of the intersection at the W 36th Street and Richfield Road. A roundabout was explored. However, geometrics are made difficult by the parking lot driveway near the intersection and by the type of traffic using the intersection, including city buses. Improving this intersection for bicycles and pedestrians is a project dependent on the City of Minneapolis Public Works.
Natural shorelines enrich recreational experiences and provide opportunities for interpretation. Natural areas in urban parks require care and maintenance.

Continue to support year-round recreational access and activities.
E Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska Focus Area Recommendations:

After several CAC meetings and additional input from community members, the following list was approved by the CAC and agreed to be incorporated as part of the Focus Area Recommendations:

1. Convert the playground south of the beach to nature play, with play opportunities for all ages.
2. Improve water quality entering the lake from the ECCO neighborhood watershed by daylighting the storm sewer at 33rd Street and integrating recreational amenities such as boardwalks into the stormwater treatment.
3. Provide an ADA compliant ramp at 32nd Street and make the crossing and access at 34th Street fully ADA compliant.
4. At parkway crossings, provide sufficient landing areas along the west curb of East Calhoun Parkway. Reconstruct stairways leading down to the lake.
5. Collaborate with the City of Minneapolis to improve the 36th St W intersection for bicycle circulation.
6. Protect and restore the oak woodlands on the slopes on the east side of the lake, and East Calhoun Parkway.
Throughout the master plan recommendations, a key priority is the careful consideration to protect and enhance natural resources. The graphic below depicts shoreline treatments and stormwater management techniques proposed in order to improve habitats for native species, as well as accommodation of recreational uses.

Replacing and relocating the pedestrian path with a multi-functional boardwalk will not only improve circulation and access, but will also provide natural resources and water quality benefits.

The boardwalk is designed with built-in infrastructure to prohibit floatables entering the lake. It also serves as a protection to limit shoreline disturbance and promote environmental learning opportunities.

Shoreline treatments and stormwater management techniques are being included to cleanse runoff, provide an enhanced and improved habitat for native species, using grading, boardwalks and trails to protect plantings, increasing diversity not only of vegetation but of the user experience around the lakes.

**Shoreland Species**
- Yellow Perch
- Monarch
- Green Frog
- Red Shouldered Hawk
- Thirteen-lined Squirrel
- Selborne's Ptarmigan
- Bar Oak
- Bonsai
- Walleye
- Damsel Fly
- Tiger Salmon
- Tree Swallow
- Little Brown Bat
- Hepatica
- Red Oak
- Bluetongue Beetle
- Dragonfly
- Painted Turtle
- Wood Duck
- Grey Squirrel
- Wild Ginger
- Other
- Northern Pike
- Whirling Bug
- Garter Snake
- Mallard
- Oregon Rush
- Gravel
- Other
- Water Strider
- Joe Pye Weed
- Marsh Marigold
- Other
- Other
- Other: Canada Goose, White-tailed Buck, Red-tailed Hawk, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Pheasant, Bobcat, Wolf, Bobcat, Coyote

**Upland Species**
- Other
- Red Oak
- American Elm
- Other
- Hemlock
- Serviceberry
- Other: Pennsylvania sedge, Sparganium, Zigzag goldenrod, Wood aster

**Shoreline restoration with sedges to reduce erosion, eliminate invasive species.**

**Overlook Structure with Floatable Containment**

**Overlook Area**

**Pedestrian Trail (at Stormwater Management Area)**

**Bicycle Trail**

**Pedestrian Refuge/Connection to Lake**

**ADA Ramp/Connection to Lake**

**Parkway**
Focus Area Recommendations: Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

The master plan recommends multi-purpose solutions such as this boardwalk trail that also creates habitat and space for stormwater management.

Restored shoreline and habitat enrich recreational experiences.
Adult exercise stations along the trails are recommended in the master plan.

A nature playground at 32nd would have expanded opportunities for the 5-12 age group.
Focus Area Recommendations:
Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

Possible roundabout improvements at the 36th Street intersection. Further coordination with the City will be needed.

Improve access to lake recreational activities.
S CALHOUN/BDE MAKA SKA AND WILLIAM BERRY FOCUS AREA

Existing conditions
The South Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska and William Berry focus area is one of the quieter places around the two lakes, due in large part to adjacent land uses, surrounding topography, and the lack of developed recreational amenities. The limits are Lakewood Cemetery to the east, William Berry woods to the west, and the lake itself to the north.

The few clues to natural and human history of this area are not readily apparent today. Before European settlement, the southeastern shoreline of Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska was probably wetland, evidenced by soil borings that record several feet of fill. Early records show that a creek flowed south out of Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska and meandered through a tamarack bog to Lake Harriet. In the decade after 1829, a band of Dakota led by Chief Cloud Man, Mahpiya Wicasta, farmed a large tract of the uplands east of Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska in what is now Lakewood Cemetery and the ECCO neighborhood. The settlement was called Heyata Otunwe (Village to the Side). In 1839, the settlement was abandoned when the band moved to Bloomington (see Chapter One – Introduction and Chapter Seven - Equity). Currently, Heyata Otunwe is acknowledged by an almost hidden bronze plaque set in a small boulder between the two paths.

The infrastructure in this area also has a relatively long history. In the late 1800’s, William Berry Parkway was one of first features built in the area by the park board. The parkway connected Lake Harriet to Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska by...
Focus Area Recommendations: Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

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crossing over the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line. The streetcar line is owned today by the Minnesota Streetcar Museum, a volunteer organization that provides rides to the public in restored streetcars. Back in the early 1900’s under Superintendent Wirth, the low areas around Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska and William Berry were filled to create recreational parkland. The wetland soils underlying these areas are problematic for structures and the topography makes the lowlands prone to flooding. In the late 1930’s, the WPA built a wall along the eastern shore of Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska to armor it from northwest winds (see the East Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska focus area). In 1940, the archery range was established at the north end of William Berry Park at its current location.

Today, MPRB Operations uses a double garage just west of the trolley tracks as a maintenance facility for equipment and outdoor storage. Such a facility for staff in this approximate location is fundamental in maintaining Chain of Lakes Regional Park.

A narrow strip of parkland along the southeastern shore separates Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska from Richfield Road. Berms along the road help buffer the sound of traffic. The space is dominated by two long parking lots and bicycle and pedestrian trails. The north lot provides parking for fishermen using the “T” shaped fishing pier at 36th Street. The south lot was recently reconstructed with stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) including permeable paving, reinforced turf, and rain gardens. These parking lots are lightly used except during peak use times in the summer.

An eight-foot wide pedestrian trail along the shore of Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska is paralleled by a one-way, clockwise bicycle trail along the parkway. The bicycle and pedestrian trails between Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska and Lake Harriet converge at the signalized intersection of William Berry Parkway and Richfield Road, both heavily traveled. The intersection is a busy trail crossing with marginal sight lines. In contrast to the bicycle trails around the two lakes, the bicycle trail along the east side of William Berry Parkway is two-way.

In 2016, improvements for safety were constructed at the intersection of the parkways and Richfield Road. A bituminous pedestrian trail was replaced from Richfield Road to Linden Hills Blvd, on the west side of the parkway. In an effort to reduce conflict, trails were realigned on the east side of the intersection. Concrete “mixing zones” at Richfield Road encourage pedestrians to cross on the inside, closest to the parkway, and bicyclists to the outside of pedestrians. A new pedestrian ramp was constructed and crosswalk striping was added.
Issues and Opportunities

- The tract of parkland between the lake and Richfield Road is narrow and is dominated by the heavily used trails and long stretches of parking lots.
- South of the WPA wall, the pedestrian trail hugs the sandy shoreline, limiting good access to the water.
- The pavement of the north parking lot is in poor condition.
- The parkland at the north end of William Berry is low and subject to flooding, which is especially problematic for the archery range.
- The maintenance facility at the north end of William Berry lacks screening, an efficient layout, and is inadequate in size and space. Although neighbors complain that it is an eyesore. However, the facility is needed for maintenance and operations.
- Archery has increased in popularity since the Hunger Games movie series, however the range is in poor condition, is not accessible, and does not have state of the art challenges to meet the growing demand.
- The WPA wall is in poor condition and needs total reconstruction. (see East Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska focus area).
- Of the three major conflict points for cyclists, pedestrians, and vehicles in this area, one has been recently addressed. The intersection of William Berry Parkway and Richfield Road was improved in 2016. Two other areas still need to be resolved. Further south from the intersection, on the uphill section along William Berry Parkway, faster cyclists frequently cross into the oncoming trail lane to pass slower cyclists. The second conflict area identified as problematic by the public is the bicycle trail crossing at the intersection of William Berry Parkway and Lake Harriet Parkway.

Highlights of Master Plan Recommendations

During the master planning process, the MPRB applied for $225,000 from the Art in Public Places program from the City of Minneapolis to interpret the Native American, particularly Dakota, culture and history of the area and to memorialize Mahpiya Wicasta (Chief Cloud Man) and Heyata Otunwe, (Village to the Side). The public art program is contingent upon a related capital improvement project. The general location recommended by this master plan for the art installation is defined as somewhere along the south/southeastern shores of the lake. This location, as well as the design and character of a gathering place and access to the lake, will evolve through discussions with the Native American and Dakota communities, the descendants of Mahpiya Wicasta, and the neighborhoods.

Recommendations for improved trail circulation address known areas of conflict. Ultimately, although recent improvements were constructed at the intersection of Richfield Road and William Berry Parkway, a “Barnes Dance” or pedestrian scramble is recommended. With modifications to the signal, all vehicular traffic is stopped, allowing pedestrians, then bicyclists, to cross the intersection in every direction, including diagonally. Implementation of this solution requires approval, design, and coordination with the City of Minneapolis Public Works.

To improve connection between the park’s recreational trail system and the city’s on-street bike system at 36th Street, a new, two-way bicycle trail along the eastern edge of William Berry is recommended. Northbound cyclists will gain a direct and off-street connection to the on-street bike lane on 36th Street, thus avoiding the current three mile detour around Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska.

Recommended improvements to the maintenance facility at William Berry include a building with restrooms for staff and the public, space for an office, and a garage for maintenance equipment. A larger, organized outdoor storage area, screened from public view, may reduce complaints from neighbors while still providing needed facilities for MPRB operations.

The north end of William Berry is one of the few areas within the project area with space for additional picnicking, although soil conditions mandate ecological improvements to be woven into the recreational features. Small group picnic facilities with shelters and adjacent open space are recommended for William Berry. These will require elevating some picnic “greens” to improve drainage and creating stormwater storage areas in a similar fashion to SW and NW Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska. Boardwalks over wetlands should connect small shelters and a raised, central lawn can be shared by all for informal games. Accessible routes from newly constructed, parallel parking bays along the parkways will connect people of all abilities to these new amenities. A maintenance plan for the existing water channel within this area should also be developed.

Recommendations for the archery range include relocating it slightly to the south, to higher ground, and designing a more challenging course, that it is also accessible. As a historical use and as one of the few archery ranges in the MPRB system, it is an important feature of the park.
Dashboard of Public Input

S Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska and William Berry

Ecological and passive recreation features should be prioritized. However, other recreational amenities should also be considered to accommodate a growing and diverse demographic.

Online survey results

Ecology 64%
Recreation 36%

Flexible open and small gathering spaces
Add interpretative features including ceremonial and celebration space(s) for Native American history

Include safer on-grade crossings at Richfield Avenue such as a barnes dance crossing
Address flooding, daylight stormwater, and expand wetlands as part of restored habitat areas

Include an improved archery facility as part of the passive recreational amenities
Support to improve maintenance facilities and incorporate other uses that can expand building program

Resolve pedestrian and bicycle crossing north of the William Berry playground

Further study of the barnes dance design and review from agencies will be needed
Some feedback recommends alternative locations for the maintenance facility
Improve wetland areas coordinated with circulation patterns at key access points.

Include bicycle connection to E Calhoun Parkway through the archery area aligning north of the trolley tracks.
S Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska and William Berry Focus Area

Recommendations:

1. In collaboration with the Native American community, descendants of Mahpiya Wicasa/Chief Cloudman and other interested participants, create a gathering place/interpretive area along the south and southeast shores of Bde Maka Ska to commemorate Cloudman Village and honor the broader history and culture of the Dakota and other indigenous peoples who frequented or resided in this area.

2. Prioritize at-grade pedestrian and bicycle circulation at the intersection of Richfield Road and Calhoun/William Berry Parkway. Explore a “Barnes Dance” solution in collaboration with the City of Minneapolis.

3. Replace and enlarge the maintenance facility and screen related outdoor storage. Consider a multi-functional facility that can serve other park uses (such as restrooms).

4. Add a bicycle trail in the eastern part of William Berry that provides a two-way connection to 36th Street.

5. Consider the possibility of adding a trolley stop.

6. Improve drainage and create more usable turf for recreational areas and features, restoring the remainder of the site to wetlands and native plant communities.

7. Add picnic facilities and related bay parking along the parkways.

8. Adjust the location and upgrade the archery range with target challenges and ADA access.

9. Provide a medicine garden of historic plants used by the Dakota at the SE corner of Lake Calhoun or near the existing archery range.

10. Improve crosswalks for all visitors at William Berry Parkway, 36th Street (west side of William Berry Woods), Richfield Road, and East Calhoun Parkway.
Natural habitats are interwoven with picnic areas at William Berry.

Explore a “Pedestrian Scramble” or “Barnes Dance” crossing for the William Berry Parkway and Richfield Road intersection.

Public art will honor the history and culture of Native Americans and Dakota and help tell the story of Chief Cloud Man.

Provide flexible picnic and gathering spaces

Improve archery facilities within the William Berry area.
Focus Area Recommendations: Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska

Improve areas to be focused on improving natural habitats.

A multipurpose building near the trolley tracks provides public restrooms within a maintenance facility.