COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN
Project Title: Cedar Lake - South Beach: Construction of Improvements

MPRB Division: Planning
Project Manager: Deborah Bartels

As required by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Code of Ordinances, every construction or redevelopment project undertaken within the MPRB Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is to have a community engagement plan. The plan serves as a guide for the community engagement process through the multiple phases of planning and project development. The plan may be modified as circumstance warrants during project duration. Substantial modifications are to be communicated to stakeholders and the MPRB Board of Commissioners.

Project Description
South Beach is located on Cedar Lake, a component of the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park. The beach, which has not seen any capital investment in a number of years, is one of the few recreational amenities in the Cedar-Isles-Dean Neighborhood (CIDNA). In 2015 the neighborhood offered to fund, through its Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP, a design study for improvements to the beach. Damon Farber Associates, Inc. was hired as the landscape architecture consultant to lead the design process. The entire CIDNA neighborhood was invited to three meetings, held monthly during the summer of 2015. MPRB staff was consulted prior to community meetings. The plan was also informed by on-line surveys and social media. After a public hearing in March of 2016, the concept plan was approved by the MPRB Board of Commissioners.

No funding for construction of the beach design was in the MPRB’s five-year Capital Improvement Plan at the time of the public hearing. In the months following approval of the plan, CIDNA strategized ways to fund the construction. In late summer 2016 an anonymous donor stepped forward to help fund construction and asked that a plumbed restroom or comfort station be added to the plan. The restroom would also be available to Grand Rounds trail users. With additional NRP funds, accumulated Park Dedication Fees for the CIDNA area, and the anonymous donor, construction of the 2016-approved design for South Beach became possible.

Because the restroom was not included in the approved concept plan, an additional community
meeting and a second public hearing to amend the concept plan will be held.

South Beach is located in the southeast corner of Cedar Lake, immediately adjacent to a residence on the east. It slopes steeply down to the lake. Its eastern edge is shaded by large cottonwood trees. Pedestrian access to the beach from adjacent neighborhoods is hampered by a very busy 12’ wide multi-use regional trail and Cedar Lake Parkway. There is no parking associated with the beach and no amenities other than a picnic table near the shore and benches and a drinking fountain along the trail. A satellite toilet is provided in summer months. Maintenance vehicles access the beach via an eroding gravel path on the east side. The beach is not staffed with a lifeguard in the summer. South Beach is located two blocks from the Jones Harrison Residence, a nursing home. Many visitors would like to bring residents to enjoy views of Cedar Lake, but there are few accessible places of refuge along the busy trail and views are blocked by shoreline vegetation.

Constructed improvements will include

- A wider regional trail;
- An accessible seating plaza between the trail and beach with shade, access to the water and views of the lake;
- Low retaining walls with plantings between;
- Containment of the beach sand and separation from the adjacent picnic lawn;
- Stairs to the lake;
  - A ramp to wheel kayaks and canoes to the water;
- Canoe racks;
- A paved maintenance access to the beach with stormwater management;
- Picnic facilities;
- Pedestrian crossing improvements at Cedar Lake Parkway;
- A plumbed restroom

The approved concept plan (without the restroom) is attached to this document.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Funding Source(s)</th>
<th>Capital Sources</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Expiration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Park Dedication funding</td>
<td>$350,000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CIDNA NRP funding</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
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Engagement Recommendation

Level of Engagement: Collaborate. The improvements require a collaborate level of community engagement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inform</th>
<th>Consult</th>
<th>Collaborate</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engagement Goal:</strong></td>
<td>To provide stakeholders with factual, balanced, and timely information to help them understand the project.</td>
<td>To obtain stakeholder feedback on project analysis, alternatives, or decisions.</td>
<td>To work directly with stakeholders throughout the process to ensure that perspectives are consistently understood, considered, and reflected in project decisions.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MPRB Promise to the Public:</strong></td>
<td>The MPRB will keep stakeholders informed.</td>
<td>The MPRB will keep stakeholders informed, listen to and acknowledge feedback, and work to ensure stakeholder feedback is reflected in alternatives developed.</td>
<td>The MPRB will work with stakeholders for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate recommendations to the maximum extent possible.</td>
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This level of engagement has been reviewed by Commissioner Tabb of District 4 and by MPRB staff knowledgeable of the surrounding community. Cedar Isles Dean Neighborhood Association has agreed to help with outreach to the community.
A **non-appointed** Community Advisory Committee (CAC) is recommended, based on the MPRB’s Community Engagement Policy, because the project will not result in a change of use for the park and because the restroom is the only change to a recently approved concept plan.

Park Board staff recognizes the need to engage the community during the planning process and believes that input from engagement will help shape and define the proposed addition of the restroom to the plan. Park Board staff and their team of consultants will work with stakeholders during the design process to modify the concept plan to add a restroom building.

The non-appointed CAC will be formed by meeting attendees. MPRB Planning staff will reach out to the following groups to form the non-appointed CAC.

- Cedar Isles Dean Neighborhood Association (CIDNA)
- Residents at the Jones-Harrison Residence
- All CIDNA residents and neighbors within a three block radius of the park

**Anticipated Project Outcomes:**

Currently Cedar Lake’s South Beach lacks amenities and looks worn out. The project will provide new passive and active recreational opportunities for area residents. Existing worn amenities will be eliminated or replaced. A plumbed (and perhaps four-season) restroom or comfort station will one of few along the Grand Rounds and within the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes.

This project is supported by the 2007 Comprehensive Plan’s Vision Theme 3: “Dynamic Parks that shape city character and meet diverse community needs” with the following goal: “Park facility renewal and development respects history and focuses on sustainability, accessibility, flexibility, and beauty.”

**Stakeholder Roles and Responsibilities**

All stakeholders are expected to work collaboratively to create and refine design concepts and provide input toward final project recommendations for approval by the Board of Commissioners. Participants are expected to engage in the process in a manner that promotes respectful civil discourse and enhances mutual understanding of all stakeholder viewpoints. Any requests for public or project information should be directed to the project manager.

**Identification of Project Stakeholders**

**Stakeholders**

- CIDNA Board and neighborhood residents
- Grand Rounds trail users
- Jones-Harrison Residence residents and visitors
- Boaters and canoeists
- Attendees from previous meetings to develop concept plans

**Project Advisory Committee**
Staff will convene a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) of MPRB staff, including representatives from maintenance, trades, environmental stewardship, community outreach, park police, forestry, and aquatics departments. The PAC, which met regularly throughout the development of the concept plan, will meet once to discuss the restroom “program”, design, and location and once to review construction drawings.

**Outreach and Research Methods**

1. **Appearances at Events and through Existing Organizations**
   MPRB staff will work to reach as many people as possible, by attending existing events or organized gatherings. In addition to soliciting input at these events, staff will distribute project information.

   MPRB staff will attend CIDNA’s annual meeting on May 10, 2017 to make a brief presentation about the project.

2. **Community Meetings**
   One community meeting will be held to discuss the location of and design options for the restroom building. The meeting will be held as soon as possible in April of 2017. The schedule for community engagement is driven by the September construction start date.

3. **Public Hearings**
   - A public hearing for approval of the amended concept plan is tentatively scheduled for May 3, 2017 with full Board review on May 17.

4. **Miscellaneous Communications:**
   - Project page on website providing information and updates
   - Comment cards, surveys collected at community meetings
   - Online surveys posted on project website
   - Gov-Delivery email notifications
   - Project manager stakeholder email list for key project communications
Two postcard mailings: an invitation to the meeting and planning process, and a second mailer to announce the public hearing
- Publicity through CIDNA’s typical means of communication (e-newsletter)
- News releases
- Public hearing notice published in the Star Tribune

**Project Schedule**

**Summer 2015**
- Community engagement to prepare plans for South Beach Improvements. Three meetings held at Jones-Harrison Residence.

**April 2016**
- After a public hearing, the MPRB Board of Commissioners approves the concept plan for South Beach Improvements.

**October 2016**
- CIDNA and anonymous donor offer to fund construction of South Beach Improvements.

**December 2016**
- Capital Improvement Plan is approved by MPRB Commissioners. Funding from CIDNA’s Park Dedication Fees is included for construction of South Beach Improvements.

**February 2017**
- Prepare funding agreements.
- Begin easement/street vacation process.

**March 2017**
- Board resolutions needed:
  - Acceptance of Community Engagement Plan
  - Approval of design consultant team contract
  - Approval NRP agreement with CIDNA
  - Acceptance of anonymous donation
- Consultant team begins work.
- Project schedule confirmed.
- PAC meeting

**April 2017**
- Community meeting

**May 2017**
- Public Hearing (tentatively May 3)
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- CIDNA’s Annual Meeting - May 10
- Board of Commissioners considers adoption of changes to the plan during its regularly scheduled meeting (tentatively May 17).
- Construction documents preparation begins.
- Plan review and permit applications (Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, City of Minneapolis Public Works).
- Seek variance from City Planning Commission for construction in Shoreland Overlay District.

June-July 2017
- Review project documents (includes PAC meeting)
- Project bid for construction.
- Bids opened and reviewed.

August 2017
- Award of bid (needs Board approval)
- Preparation of contract documents

September – November 2017
- Construction of improvements

Resources
- MPRB Planning Department: support staff will help with meeting organization and preparation.
- Translators for meetings will be provided if requested.
- MPRB Planning’s Real Property Administrator will seek easements and/or vacation of street rights-of-way as needed.
- Project “soft costs” include consultant fees, additional geotechnical testing, permits, mailings and other communications.
- The MPRB Project Advisory Team (PAC), composed of trades, maintenance, and recreation staff, will meet once to review the restroom location and design options and once to review construction plans.
- Architects and engineers (structural, electrical, mechanical, and civil) are part of the Damon Farber Associates consultant team.

Evaluation Summary
The project manager has analyzed the effectiveness of the engagement process from both stakeholder and organization points of view and provided a brief summary statement. The summary statement indicates how the process has advanced policy goals and will assist the Board and staff in evaluating and informing an ongoing community engagement process.

Summary Statement: Statement pending plan completion.