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February 2, 2022

Ms. Emma Pachuta
MPRB Planner
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
2117 West River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55411

Dear Ms. Pachuta:

I am one of the members of the Minneapolis Tree Advisory Commission, and attended your presentation to that organization at its January meeting. As I am sure you recall, at that meeting you talked about the Lake of the Isles--Cedar Lake Planning effort that is currently underway, and some of the potential recommendations.

One potential recommendation apparently is the "installation of a pollinator node establishment" in Dean Park which, as you will note, is right in front of my home (I do a lot of work from home these covid-infected days; my other office is at 201 Ridgewood Avenue).

I have worked on establishing trees in Dean Park ever since the area was redone in 1974, and the road crossing the park was removed. I served on the Citizens Advisory Task Force when Dean Parkway was re-done several years ago, and helped save a number of key trees. I have planted well more than half of the existing trees in Dean Park, including many rare varieties of resistant elms, catalpa, sequoia, magnolia, American chestnut, and other unique and unusual varieties. It is a "mini-arboretum".

I have never heard of pollinator nodes, and I wish to know ALL of the specifics concerning them, including (without limitation) what disturbance their installation would bring to existing trees, what they would do to the present pastoral use and enjoyment of Dean Park, and any and all other factors relating to this "new thing". Please provide me with as much information as you can, as I intend to share it with the Board of CIDNA (which, not coincidentally, was formed on my garden terrace on July 4, 1974). I thank you in advance for assisting me in understanding this matter.

Very sincerely yours,



Donald C. Willeke

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DCW:hs

February 22, 2022

Emma R. Pachuta
Project Manager
Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
2117 West River Road
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Dear Ms. Pachuta:

I am president of the church council at Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church ("LOTI"), on the north arm of Lake of the Isles. This letter is written in follow up to emails from both me and our pastor, Dr. Arden Haug, sent to Elizabeth Shaffer and forwarded to you yesterday. LOTI has significant concerns about several aspects of the proposed redesign of the parkland at the lake, and we respectfully request that the Board account for these concerns as it moves forward with the planning process. The principal issues are these:

1. **Roadway access is essential:** Closing the parkway would seriously harm our ability to use the front entrance to the church and, more importantly, would deprive the parsonage of any road access at all, leaving it a landlocked parcel. This would badly impair our ability to access and use the property for regular Sunday worship, weddings, funerals, concerts, and other special events. It would also place an unfair burden on the elderly and disabled, who need easy access to both buildings, not to mention the need for emergency vehicles to access both. Access from multiple points is critical, and parking has always been deeply appreciated.
2. **LOTI has been a good community member:** We open our doors to all. Wholly apart from our regular church activities, we are an important community gathering point. We host multiple AA and other recovery groups on a near daily basis, along with concerts, book readings for Birchbark, lectures, and other events. Our ability to continue hosting such events is threatened in the same manner as our worship activities. We are not a political organization, and we try to stay out of politics, but we hope the obvious contributions we make to the community would make the Park Board want to take our needs and concerns into account.
3. **The church building is important to the park:** The church building itself is an historic structure that beautifies the area. It is a landmark, and is probably the most frequently photographed and painted building on the lake (indeed, a photograph of it was on the front page of the Metro Section of the Star Tribune just last week). Many of our members started out as park users who were struck by the beauty of the building and wanted to explore our worship offerings. We constantly think about how we relate to the lake and how the lake

relates to us. Recent additions reflect this, including an outdoor patio that is regularly used by park visitors, along with four brass bells installed in our steeple, three of them just last year. The response to this musical offering from both neighbors and park users has been overwhelmingly positive. The church and the parkland, in tandem, form an island of calm in the middle of a busy city, but we won't be able to maintain the building to current standards if the Board makes it inaccessible and consequently undercuts our financial stability. We are an important part of the lake's history, we welcome people of all faiths and backgrounds, and we hope our presence and role is embraced rather than discounted.

3. **We are a commuter church:** We are, and always have been, a commuter church. Most of our members don't live in the neighborhood (and never have historically), so being able to easily reach the church and park their vehicles is essential to the church's functioning. Cutting off that access would likely curtail our current attendance, and would absolutely limit our potential for future growth. The church itself was built nearly 100 years ago in reliance on the parkway as our primary public access; removing it would have been absolutely unthinkable then, and should be now. Despite our beautiful location and building, we are not a wealthy church, we never have been (the building itself was constructed by Congregationalists who overbuilt and promptly folded), and we need every member we can get.

4. **21st Street is not an acceptable alternative:** 21st Street cannot accommodate our needs. It is too narrow to ever be a major artery, particularly in the wintertime when it cannot accommodate two-way traffic at several points due to snow and ice constriction. Even during the summer two-way traffic is tight. We are already worried that this limits emergency access, but those concerns are lessened now due to the current availability of the parkway. We also think that re-routing all lake traffic to 21st Street would not be a kind thing to do to our residential neighbors or be safe for the school. While our 21st Street neighbors will likely speak for themselves, we doubt they intended to buy homes on a busy roadway, unlike our neighbors in the larger homes on the lake.

5. **Abandoning the parkway would violate the city code:** From a legal standpoint, the Minneapolis Code requires all lots to have frontage on a public street, *see Mpls Code of Ordinances*, Title 20, Ch. 535, Art. II § 535.200. This requirement (among others) prohibits the Board from abandoning this particular stretch of the parkway, as it would deprive both the church and the parsonage of their frontage and landlock the parsonage.

6. **The proposed activity hub and water treatment plant should not be located directly in front of the church:** Obviously no one wants to walk out their front door and have public restrooms and a water treatment facility be the first thing they see. While we cannot stop the Park Board from building permanent structures on its own land, our building is open to all (and has been throughout the pandemic), and many park users have relied on our accessible restrooms for years, with our blessing. We hope the Park Board would give us some credit for

Emma Pachuta
Project Manager
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this. In addition, several hundred people pass through our building every week, and having the existing view of the lake replaced by a structure that will likely serve primarily as a restroom is not likely to create a good impression on these people, either of the church or the Park Board. If the Board does resolve to build a permanent facility, we would suggest it be located on the south side of the lake where it will not obstruct anyone's view and where its modern design can stand alone and stand out, rather than creating a potentially jarring contrast with our historic church building.

In closing, we thank you for your consideration of these issues, and respectfully request that this letter and our earlier emails be made part of the record of public comment related to this process. Please feel free to reach out to me any time by phone (612-804-1777) or email (marty@martincarlsonlaw.com) if you have any questions or wish to discuss these concerns directly.

Very truly yours,

Martin A. Carlson
Council President

Martin A. Carlson
Mary L. Knoblauch
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Minneapolis, MN 55405
(612) 804-1777

February 24, 2022

Emma R. Pachuta
Project Manager
MINNEAPOLIS PARK & RECREATION BOARD
2117 West River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55411

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Re: Proposed Isles-Cedar Master Plan

Dear Ms. Pachuta:

We are writing to comment on the proposed Isles-Cedar Master Plan, and to urge the Park Board not to pursue most of the proposed changes to Lake of the Isles. The vast majority of these changes seem very much like solutions in search of problems, and many would actually limit the opportunities for park users to enjoy the park's natural amenities.

By way of background, we have been fortunate to live near the west side of the lake for over twenty years, and are both avid outdoorspeople. We run, walk, bike, canoe, ski, and skate on the lake, and made heavy use of the green spaces near our house while raising our son, now a first-year college student. The accessible parkland is one of our favorite features of the neighborhood, and it's great for kids. What we like most about the park is its abundant unstructured green space, its traditional feel that blends with the overall character of the neighborhood, and the easy lake access from virtually any point in the park. The proposed changes would diminish rather than enhance the features we love the most. Along with the issues raised in a letter sent on behalf of our church, Lake of the Isles Lutheran, our concerns are as follows:

1. **There is no consistency to the landscaping plan and it undercuts the features which have made the park successful for over a century.** The whole point of the park, as originally envisioned and maintained until this point is to have an open, green, unbuilt, and pastoral setting equally open to all. Green is equitable; it's green for everyone, and it's also flexible. You can have large gatherings, small gatherings, or no gatherings at all, leaving just a peaceful, open view. The relative homogeneity of the park is soothing, and it's also great for kids and pets. The new vision of the park has people jumping from lawn to prairie to marshland and back again with little rhythm or warning, and it has no relation to the rest of the neighborhood, which is one of the best-preserved late-19th/early 20th century neighborhoods in America. Yes, this is just one period in our history, but it's living history in three dimensions and the Park Board should embrace this rather than run

from it. Acknowledging the history right in front of us doesn't mean we can't talk about it in all its aspects – the good, the bad and the ugly – nor does it mean we can't talk about other eras in the region's history – we can and should. But the Kenwood neighborhood as a whole still reflects to a large extent the vision of the city held by the people who originally built it, and learning and understanding that history in all its dimensions helps us better understand the times we are living in now. The park itself is an excellent and rare example of a large City Beautiful park, and while this is hardly the only model for a successful park, it's a model that has proved durable and adaptable for over a hundred years and it has served this neighborhood and the City very well. Isles is pastoral, Cedar is wild, Bde Maka Ska is recreational and carries more important Native American history, while Harriet has a more formal civic structure. Each lake has its own character and we aren't well-served by fighting their long-standing natures when in aggregate they exhibit great diversity.

2. **Permanent structures are largely unnecessary.** The proposed “activity hubs” and picnic pavilions will make the areas where they are located useless for other purposes, and will needlessly conflict with the historic character of the area. No one needs a permanent, modern structure directly in front of historic Lake of the Isles Lutheran, particularly when the Rec Center is so nearby. Placing a picnic pavilion on the cedar point off the West Bay would destroy one of the most natural, tranquil and beautiful spots on the lake. An “activity hub” by the West Bay, coupled with the canoe racks, the dock, trails, and a possible boardwalk (which would block the canoe access) would leave the area more infrastructure than parkland, wrecking the beautiful and historic vista residents and visitors first see when reaching the area from Kenwood Parkway. The original park planners favored uninterrupted green space for a reason, and this aesthetic has been embraced by residents for generations. After the Mall of America, the Chain of Lakes is already the most visited spot in the State of Minnesota, and people aren't coming to look at infrastructure. Explore Minnesota, the state tourism office, estimated that in 2017 the Chain of Lakes drew more than seven million visitors, exceeding the total annual combined attendance at the Twins and Vikings stadiums by over 100%. On a warm summer day, a simple walk around the lake shows the neighborhood is open to and heavily used by Minnesotans from all walks of life, as has been the case for decades. Minneapolis is a city comprised of beloved neighborhoods, but people are voting with their feet, literally by the millions, to say that Lake of the Isles is unique. Please keep it that way.

3. **In-filling the North Arm and West Bay will make the lake less accessible.** Yes, water quality is important, but Lake of the Isles is one of the least natural lakes in the State of Minnesota (by design, per above) and the most impactful issue for most users is actually the riotous overabundance of invasive species, particularly milfoil, which makes navigating the lake quite difficult in the summer. If the Park Board is going to commit major resources to Lake of the Isles, we'd prefer that it buy another lake mower or two and mow the lake on a more regular basis. No amount of vegetation or alum will correct the lake's water problem until people stop using fertilizer on their lawns and the

Park Board and City stop salting the roads, neither of which is likely to happen any time soon. While we do support limited alum treatments (i.e., without permanent, unnatural water treatment facilities built into the lakeside), we need to face up to the fact that we'll have an impaired lake until we reach some sort of societal consensus that addresses the root causes. Filling in large portions of the lake will not only destroy the lake's historical character, but it will make lake access difficult to impossible in those areas, and is unlikely to correct the problem to such an extent that you'd ever want to drink the water or eat the fish on a regular basis.

4. **The proposed boardwalks will seriously limit accessibility.** Since the proposed boardwalks are over open water, they would need to have railings on both sides so no one falls in. In the winter, when the lake freezes, this means they will function as giant fences that people will need to climb over or around to access the lake surface. The boardwalk on the north arm would make the area look like a giant cattle corral in the winter, and the proposed skating loop in the center won't work either. If the north arm is "rewilded" and turned to a swamp or bog, it will have plant cover well above the water line, which will remain above the water when the lake freezes, as is the case at several points on Cedar Lake. You can't skate on plants. It would get worse in the summertime when the trails are more heavily used, particularly by the many slow-moving friend or family groups you see walking three or four abreast on the trails. Now, there is room for everyone to move at their own pace. We can just go on the grass to jog around folks. You can't do that with a railed boardwalk, meaning there will be significant and undesirable pedestrian congestion.

5. **The proposed prairie plantings make the park less accessible and less safe.** While we love the prairie on the north end of Cedar Lake, we do not think this is appropriate for Lake of the Isles. As a park user, you can't do anything with prairie land other than walk past it and look at it. You can't picnic on it, play catch or frisbee, or even walk through it with your dog. While the lawns on the west side of the lake near our house may not be as heavily used as other points on the park, they are still heavily used, particularly by our neighborhood kids, and they are greatly appreciated by park users who simply want to get some space from other people; this alone is a valuable use in a densely-packed city. Prairie also burns. It needs to burn to stay healthy, and it also burns when you don't expect it to, which we experienced with the Burnham Wood prairie that's now been destroyed by the light rail. Fire is in the nature of that ecosystem, and it's fine in a thinly populated area like north Cedar, but downright dangerous in a residential neighborhood filled with 100 year-plus wooden homes like ours. Last but not least, for the first time in decades we have serious violent crime in the area, and any landscape (i.e., tall grass) that gives potential cover to the criminal element in our community is going to make many users feel unsafe, particularly at night.

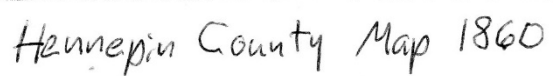
That's a lot of what we don't like. What do we like? We like green. Green open space with lawns and trees. We would love it if the Park added more trees. Maintain the trails, maintain the parkway. Making the bike trail two-way would be nice, better and

Emma Pachuta
Project Manager
February 24, 2022
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safer than riding on the road when going counter-clockwise. Please keep the parking on the parkway. Yes, cars are bad on a number of levels, but they're a fact of life and we need places to put them, particularly for visitors and emergency vehicles. We'd love to see the lake mowed more regularly. Beyond that, it ain't broke, please don't fix it. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Martin A. Carlson
Mary L. Knoblauch



Hennepin County Map 1860

How about some "Reserved Wildlife Areas" like islands in Lake of the Isles?

Where is the SWLRT tunnel on these fabulous full-color maps?

From Wikipedia: Human settlement is often attracted to shorelines, and settlement often disrupts breeding habitats for littoral zone species. For example, many turtles are killed on roads when they leave the water to lay their eggs in upland sites. Fish can be negatively affected by docks and retaining walls which remove breeding habitat in shallow water. Some shoreline communities even deliberately try to remove wetlands since they may interfere with activities like swimming. Overall, the presence of human settlement has a demonstrated negative impact upon adjoining wetlands.

Cedar Lake Park Board Development

Comment by Susu Jeffrey

The Minneapolis Park Board is planning to develop Cedar Lake and has offered two plans at https://www.minneapolis-parks.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/2021-12-12_Cedar-Isles_Initial-Park-Concepts_final.pdf. Scroll down to view the concept maps of Plan A, "Living Lakes," or B "Unique Lake Experiences."

Plan A describes a "rewilding" walk and bike path which should be called "unwinding" since it would solidify former marshland. The area was wetland, lakes and hilllocks, not savanna. The proposed "prairie" is also historic wetland. In fact the area is mostly filled wetland. Increased rainfall is predicted with climate change, particularly super storms with "rain bombs."

Plan B is more potentially destructive with hyper development. Both plans seem to exist without consideration of the history of the land.

How to Save Cedar Lake

Wetlands

Reinstate some of the lost wetlands that formerly made Cedar "the cleanest lake in the city." Wetland buffers west of Bde Maka Ska certainly helped to clean that lake until Calhoun condo developers dumped illegal underground garage runoff into the lagoon that fed into the lake. New wetlands enhance the life of the lakes for all animal and plant life.

Shoreline Restoration

The city owns the shoreline and 12-feet up from the water onto the land around Cedar. This is public, not private property. Planting indigenous vegetation preserves the lake edge, cuts erosion and pollution, provides fish, bird and other wildlife habitat, it blooms and changes with the seasons and sweetens the air.

Aerators

There is an algae problem at Cedar Lake which is a water quality, a close-the-beaches problem. It can kill dogs who ignore warning signs and jump in the lake for a drink or to cool off or to fetch. A floating lake aerator, like a lawn sprinkler in mid-lake, reduces the growth of algae and circulates oxygenated water. Lakes without proper aeration cannot break-down nutrients quickly enough which turn into muck on the bottom and fuel algae blooms.

Education & Conservation Laws

Uneducated home owners around the lakes often hire expensive yard service companies that apply chemicals instead of organic lawn treatments. It's faster but not cheaper because the chemical treatments are addictive. Smart cities invest in education campaigns and outlaw nutrient-rich yard applications. [Chemical lawn treatments in our city are comparable to refusing COVID vaccines.]

Plant Trees

Join the earth effort to mitigate climate crisis by planting some of the 6-billion trees needed to absorb carbon. Additionally trees provide shade, wildlife habitat, beauty, suck up excessive rain, hold soil in place and studies prove that treed neighborhoods have less crime.

Cedar Lake History

Cedar Lake is situated within an ancient Mississippi River path that was rerouted by glacier growth and retreat thousands of years ago. In the 1860 map notice the creek in the northeast where the Lake formerly emptied into what is now called Bassett Creek.

Before European settlement Cedar was much larger than it is today. The lake was surrounded by a marshy area unfit for farming. Wetlands are nature's water cleansers. That is why "in the 1890s, it was known for the clarity and purity of its water. Ice harvesting became a big business."¹

The contraction of Cedar Lake and filling of its surrounding wetlands resulted in stagnation, pollution and loss of clarity. Today we take for granted that we cannot see into the water or see our feet when we wade.

In 1867 a railroad causeway was filled-in on the east side of Cedar and the southern end of nearby Brownie Lake. Another rail company laid tracks on the east side of Cedar and constructed a maintenance and repair yard in the northeast section.

In 1883 J.J. Hill built a double track on the north end of Cedar. In the same year Brownie's surface area was reduced by a third with the expansion of the railroad embankment in the southwest part of the shrinking lake. By 1903 "local residents claimed Cedar had gone down seven-feet over the previous decade."² Hill filled the

¹ *Cedar lake Park Association: A History*, Neil Trembley, Cedar Lake Park Association, 2012, p. 3.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

north shore of Cedar with sand and locomotive hotbox cinders where a huge industrial rail yard metastasized.

In 1913 Cedar was lowered another five-feet by the Minneapolis Park Board to artificially connect it to Lake of the Isles to create a "Chain of Lakes" in order to service the romantic row boat craze allowing young people to be private together but in public view. The Park Board traditionally develops new facilities in response to the latest athletic fad like longer connected bike trails or pickle ball.

Brownie Lake was reduced by more than half with the 1916 channel connecting it to Cedar and Isles. A century later, 2016, a mountain bike trail was introduced on the west side of Brownie's steep donut hole profile. Mountain bike trails are notoriously erosion-prone.

Because Brownie became so sheltered from the wind by 1925 the lake no longer "turned over" by wind action oxygenating and mixing the bottom and top layers of water. Fish can only live in the upper, oxygen-rich, part of Brownie. Lakes turn over spring and fall when the dense colder bottom water mixes with the warmer, lighter upper level.

Cedar Lake also lost circumference. "As the waterline receded, Cedar Lake's east bay dried...and became a backwater. The area was held in such disregard that in the 1950s and 60s, the city of Minneapolis used the old dried-up east bay as a garbage dump. Eventually the earth covered over the garbage and a hilly cottonwood forest arose."³

Until about 1980, the vast rail yard that dominated the north and east sides of Cedar Lake ceased operations. In the mid-1980s, the railroads began pulling up hundreds of iron rails that crossed the filled former wetlands, now flatlands polluted by years of hazardous industrial dumping. There's a story about a train carload of paint that was simply trashed in situ during World War 2 because the train car space was needed.

In 1989 a group of Cedar Lake neighborhood visionaries met to discuss how to create parkland out of the old railroad yard. Cedar Lake Park Association raised private money to purchase the former wetland which was turned into a prairie with an on-top bicycle path and donated to the park board. Otherwise up-scale housing developers were eyeing the property with a spectacular view of sunrise over downtown Minneapolis. "On-top" construction was essential so as not to disturb toxic and hazardous wastes lurking under the surface from a century of railroad dumping.

Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) is currently aimed through this historically poisoned and reclaimed land. Even worse, SWLRT is routed through Cedar Lake, actually *through* the lake, in a tunnel. As it happens the project is three years behind schedule and almost \$2-*billion* over budget. The project is reputed to be

³ Ibid., p. 4.

currently on-hold but advocates argue that it has cost so much, so far that it would be defeatist to not complete it—the government habit of throwing good money after bad.

Cedar Lake as a living body of water cannot exist surrounded and constricted with compacted walking and bike trails and boardwalks constructed into the lake. Cedar Lake is not an isolated puddle unconnected to a natural system where wind twice yearly turns over the lake and year-round the groundwater moves and flows in and out.

Furthermore Cedar Lake is at the top of the Chain of Lakes. Most of Minneapolis drains into the Chain, meanders through the city carrying road runoff, dog and yard waste, erosion, litter—which is why vegetative buffers can help to save our lakes for swimming, fishing, boating and the future.

For the hundreds of local residents stuck in rush hour traffic the inconvenience of outlawing two-way vehicular traffic on Cedar Lake Parkway would be even more of a daily drag. Steep geography of the area and several impassible rail line crossings north, east and south block timely entrance and exit. Fire, police and ambulance would need extra time that could be the difference between life and death.

In addition 100-car railroads carry explosive ethanol through the neighborhood toward the Twins baseball stadium and then through downtown Minneapolis. Without thru-traffic on Cedar Lake Parkway the thousands of daily commuters are trapped and limited to east-west egress on Interstate-394, north from the Penn Avenue dead end, or locally west and south through the neighborhoods to Lake Street.

The hubris of designing a landscape without knowledge of the history and geography of the land guarantees pre-failure. Let us begin with the precepts of do no (more) harm and work with nature.

Note: Quotations are from *Cedar Lake Park Association: A History*, Neil Trembley, Cedar Lake Park Association, 2012, pp. 3; 7-8; 4.

Kate L. Christianson
2504 West Lake of the Isles Parkway
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Thursday, March 10, 2022

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Ms. Emma R. Pachuta
Project Manager
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
2117 West River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55411

re: Proposed Master Plan for Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles

Dear Ms. Pachuta:

I struggle to engage with either concept for the proposed Cedar-Isles master plan, because in many ways it seems that we are putting the cart before the horse: engaging a consultant and drawing up designs before reaching community consensus about the non-negotiable wear and tear thresholds for these lakes as development intensifies around them.

Here, then, taking two steps back, is my impassioned "wish list" for this project, and it is largely procedural:

(I voice these aspirations as a homeowner on Lake of the Isles Parkway who, with her husband, has raised two children here, hosted many families, college students and adults from across the country and abroad, and relished this neighborhood for 50-plus years. We are an active family--biking, walking, kayaking, playing catch or frisbee by the lake, volunteering for the City of Lakes Loppet and cheering on the runners at the Twin Cities Marathon--and I am a longtime funder and advocate for increasing access to Montessori education and training, with its nature-integrated curriculum, in the Twin Cities.)

Work with metrics--Given the projected number of nearby residents and visitors over the next 20 years--which must be available directly or indirectly through the City's 2040 plan--we should be able to figure out the wear and tear that this will inevitably bring to the parks and, importantly, establish non-negotiable wear and tear thresholds that we are willing to let the land, flora and fauna, and water take. *Defining and articulating those environmental thresholds first, through community consensus, is perhaps the greatest community engagement opportunity embedded in the master plan project.* It will engage younger audiences--who care especially about environmental health and climate change resilience; allow us to consciously live by our values; create a foundation for the decision-making to follow; and make the overall execution of the master plan clear, efficient and stewardship-driven. (To me, the current process feels consumerist, asking us to pick and choose amenities.)

Consider "Doing Nothing" as an Option--Weighing the pros and cons of *not* acting (e.g. on the creation of activity nodes) is simply sound practice. That said, this City has borne tragic costs from willful (SWLRT) and foolhardy urban planning (1990s plans for Lake of the Isles). We must go slowly and with great care, given the intricacy of the original park design (see below), the increasing evidence of health and wellness benefits from being in unprogrammed and unstructured natural environments (see Johann Hari's book, *Stolen Focus*, and his recent interview with Ezra Klein), and the fact that nearby Kenwood Park is already slated to be zoned for particular uses and activities. As development increases around the lakes we will need restful places for what Hari calls "meandering time" all the more; and both lakes are, and always have been, designed for that.

Thus, in practical terms, we must work with existing facilities and infrastructure--like the nearby Kenwood Park and Rec and activity zones in Kenwood Park itself—for a few years before assessing whether to also build permanent structures on the parkway. This will minimize the carbon footprint and respect the much-appreciated character of the parks. Temporary structures can always be brought in as needed.

Prioritize Large Trees--Large elms, oaks, crabs and others "anchor" the Lake of the Isles landscape, in particular, and give the lake much of its historic feel; they are also hugely important for sequestering carbon. Such trees should take priority over the widening of any bike path and be regularly monitored for wear and tear, as they tend to be located near the roadways.

Add Large Trees for Climate-Change Resilience--It makes sound environmental sense to plant more trees on Lake of the Isles Parkway, which has barren spots, especially rare and hardy native species which are climate-change resistant (see the 3/8/22 *New York Times* article on the work of Dr. Diana Beresford-Kroeger in Canada). Larger trees will add to the grandeur of the original park plan, sequester the most carbon and offer shade and respite. (Conversely, the dozens of small wispy trees planted mechanistically around the lake many years ago, are still embarrassingly small and out of place.)

Save the Historic Charm and Integrity of Lake of the Isles--There is a monumental grace and stature to Lake of the Isles Parkway, with its ribbon-like road, majestic trees, City Beautiful aesthetic, and elegant and well-maintained period homes (est. 1900). It is treasured for that. Thus, our task with this master plan is to *preserve and restore the City Beautiful aesthetic*—given that it remains well-loved and impactful--while tending to long-term environmental needs. More specifically, I advocate for a plan that maximizes land and green space on the parkways, addresses water quality and filtration issues underground and/or offsite, and keeps views and vistas uninterrupted from the street and sidewalk to the lake (i.e., no obtrusive signage, elevated handrails, roofed picnic shelters, permanent restrooms or new construction); and hold out the vision and possibilities for that.

A tried-and-true example of this approach is the fairly recent addition of shoreline grasses around Lake of the Isles: arranged in different heights and combinations around the lake, they add layers of greenery, softness, rhythm and pattern in front of the trees and serve a functional purpose.

An analogous example can be found in the current architectural plans, just reviewed by the City's Historic Preservation Commission, for the partial demolition and rebuild of the signature and highly visible house on 2424 West Lake of the Isles Parkway: the proposed design essentially preserves the house as we currently see it and maintains its integrity, while removing unsightly additions and making the home more livable for contemporary families. Keep in mind, though, that this level of attentiveness takes time: the design was developed over three-and-a-half years by two of our City's top architects.

Thus, I urge you, in formulating the Cedar-Isles master plan, to work with designers and engineers who can capably address climate-change resilience *and have proven understanding of the intrinsic nature of the City Beautiful-inspired park design.*

Please Remember, We Are a Neighborhood--It is hard to reach us uniformly as a group, given the suspended home delivery of Hill and Lake Press and the fact that not all of us use social media or gather at the same local schools and public institutions; but--speaking on behalf of many of my neighbors--we do care about our neighborhood, and it was often the parks, and adjacency to the parks, that brought us here. Please work with Kenwood and CIDNA residents to distribute flyers door to door as needed.

Please also know that, while we welcome people of all ages, interests and backgrounds here, we live here, and noise carries across the parkway and the lake. When I read "Celebrate" as one of your goals for the master plan, I flinch, remembering the night of this year's Luminary Loppet, when my windows rattled from the warped rock music (coming from a wooden platform on the lake) and I was walking around the house near 10 o'clock with a construction headset on, looking for a place to sleep.

In sum, these lakes are vulnerable as we continue to build around them; they are also increasingly precious as we use them and appreciate them for rest, recreation, and wellbeing. I join my children, many friends, guests and neighbors in advocating for a Cedar-Isles master plan that 1) brings the intergenerational community together to articulate and address nonnegotiable environmental thresholds, and 2) boldly protects the essence of the original City Beautiful plan, with its timeless civic messaging: that grandeur through nature is a community gift, available to all.

Thank you in advance for giving this careful attention.

Sincerely,

Kate Christianson
katewintonc@gmail.com

February 28, 2022

Emma R. Pachuta
Project Manager
Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
2117 West River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55411

RE: Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles Master Plan – Proposed Project

Good morning Ms. Pachuta:

I was recently made aware of the Minneapolis Park Board's Master Plan for the Cedar Lake/Lake of the Isles, and I was unable to attend the community meeting over the weekend. While I can appreciate the effort of further improving lake areas for the enjoyment and enrichment for the masses, I feel that certain improvements should be modified or alternatives considered.

As a civil engineer in a metro area municipality, closing down a main collector that is highly utilized is never a good idea. Closing down vehicular access to the North of Lake of the Isles, I believe is a huge mistake. While most cities promote walkable communities, you cannot simply throw out vehicular access. While we all want to go green, cars are not going anywhere anytime soon. I am unsure of the legalities of closing that section of road are with buildings fronting that as their primary access, but I would imagine these residents/church have a leg to stand on to prevent that from happening. There appears to be plenty of land between Lake of the Isles Pkwy and the lake to do what you want without abandoning the Park Board's overall objective and without losing that drive lane. It is a low speed area and motorists and cyclists coexist just fine. Once a road goes away, it is simply too difficult to get back, and it makes everyone look foolish.

As a fire fighter in another metro area municipality I can tell you that cutting off direct access routes to the homes as well as the church a long that stretch is also something that should be reconsidered. It is simply not safe. Especially during typical Minnesota winters where lanes narrow, parking disappears, and threading a fire apparatus between vehicles becomes a dangerous task. It is dangerous from not only a response time perspective, but as an operational perspective for fire fighters and motorists driving on those narrow roads. There are two fire hydrants along that stretch that now become more difficult to access if fire response vehicles cannot quickly establish a hydrant connection. Fire trucks can empty their tanks in a matter of minutes during fire attack if there is no outside water source readily available. I would imagine/hope The Minneapolis Fire Department had an opportunity to review this plan before it was proposed to the public.

As a member of Lake of the Isle Lutheran Church, I believe that they are the ones who are hit the hardest. I read the letter that Council President Martin Carlson wrote to you regarding this project and he has some tremendously valid points. Me and my growing family are commuter members, and we utilize the north portion of Lake of the Isles Parkway to get to church coming off of the 94/Hennepin Ave exit. Parking is already very scarce in that area, and we usually park 2-3 blocks away. This will only make

things more difficult especially in an area that already lacks sufficient parking. After church services we like to drive the entire lake to see beautiful setting in this urban area especially at night during the Christmas season. We usually stop for a meal at a nearby restaurant so we spend even more money in Minneapolis. Members like me who make those financial contributions keep this place going.

Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church have been great stewards of the area, promoting their "All Are Welcome" slogan in both word and deed. That was what attracted me about this place. While it is my hope that we continue to be members here no matter the outcome of this project, the harsh reality is that some members will leave putting the church, and it's beautiful building at risk of closing its doors. I would imagine a boarded-up church would be quite the eyesore in your new park area. The Lake of the Isles area is known for that church building and the positivity it brings to this community. I am asking you to listen to their concerns, and come up with a solution that works for everyone. Listen to them to understand, and not to simply respond.

I understand the need for water quality treatment in urban bodies of water, and I feel that details of what exactly the proposed "In-Lake Water Quality Treatment" is. Can you clarify? LOTI Church referred to it as a water treatment plant and I am fairly certain the Park Board is not doing that. Is it a buffer area for stormwater runoff, filtration/infiltration basin, or what? Please clarify. Also, please clarify what the proposed amenities at Area 4 near the church are. If it is a bathroom building, couldn't that be shifted to the north point so it is not in front of a residence or the church?

These two lakes are a highly desirable area, and its intent is coming from a place of community involvement and I look forward to see it progress, but like a I mentioned before there are definitely some modifications/adjustments that should be seriously considered if not made.

Thank you and I look forward to your response.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brandon Stenglein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Brandon M. Stenglein P.E.

b.m.stenglein@gmail.com

651.755.4930

CC: Park Commissioner Elizabeth Shaffer

Michelle McCreery
2917 Drew Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55416
(612) 636-0116
mmccreery@me.com

March 4, 2022

Emma R. Pachuta
Project Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
2117 West River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55411

Dear Ms. Pachuta:

I am writing in response to the Park Board's Master Plan for Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles.

Here is some personal background. My husband, Mark Duff and I have been residents of CIDNA since 1990 and we have raised our family here. We moved in while I was beginning the master's program in the Department of Art at the University. It was during my studies of Landscape Architecture that I first began to understand the tremendous significance of our chain of lakes as public green-space. I completed my MFA in Painting & Drawing and taught at U of MN, Concordia University, & College of Visual Arts (until it closed its doors in 2012). As a visual artist reflecting on the significance of this urban green-space, I realize that the majority of my work has featured Lake of the Isles and its shoreline as subject.

During the years since we located here, we have actively experienced the chain of lakes in many ways. First we wind-surfed in Bde Maka Ska. We roller-bladed daily there or around our *serene* Lake of the Isles. After our children arrived we strolled the *family* Lake Harriet with them in the carriage. As they got a little older we roller-bladed Lake of the Isles with them in a double baby-jogger. During winter months we'd take them sledding at Kenwood Park and skating on the Lake of the Isle rink. Later, the activity became cycling with them in a double Burley. Still later, without babes in tow, we'd daily cycle the complete chain of lakes, a 16 mile ride, incorporating *rustic* Cedar Lake. When weather did not permit cycle, we'd cross-country ski Lake of the Isles, especially after the Loppett foundation began grooming. We'd ski from Cedar Lake beach, where we'd swim and walk in other seasons.

We have another connection with Lake of the Isles. We began attending Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church in 1996 and have been active members since 1997, in attendance at least twice weekly, and more often, when we have special events. I currently serve as Design and Communications director, as well. My memories of gazing out at the lake shore from the choir loft for the past nine years are unforgettable. Last year our son was married there with wedding photos beginning on the lake shore and reception on the patio. Other events on the lawn and Patio included the celebration of the installation of our new bells and tower clock, and International Day of Peace.

All of these experience have bearing on our position regarding the proposed changes.

As we have always experienced Lake of the Isles as the *serene* sister in the chain of lakes, **we oppose the addition of permanent structures/buildings**, especially regarding the concept of a "hub" in front of Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church. Such a development would detrimentally change the church's setting and presence, especially, considering events such as the numerous weddings that we host annually, (primarily for non-members of the community). The addition of permanent structures would also detrimentally change site lines on the north end of the lake,

Secondly, we oppose the **permanent closure of the parkway at any place or time**. Again, this would be extremely detrimental to our church community, many of whom are commuters and need the access. as well as street parking. Personally, it would deprive us, and our neighbors of a commonly used route to return to CIDNA from Franklin.

Here we have provided some personal background and our basic position. In addition, Mark and I are in complete agreement with specifics outlined in a letter shared by Martin Carlson, President of Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church which states:

- Roadway access is essential.
- LOTI has been a good community member.
- The church building is important to the park:
- We are a commuter church.
- 21st Street is not an acceptable alternative.
- Abandoning the parkway would violate the city code.
- The proposed activity hub and water treatment plant should not be located directly in front of the church.

While we understand that final decisions have not been determined, we feel a sense of urgency to guide the process in service of those who perennially experience and utilize Lake of the Isles.

Sincerely,
Michelle C. McCreery & W. Mark Duff

cc: Elizabeth Shaffer, Minneapolis Park Commissioner

Susanne Haas
2117 Kenwood Parkway
Minneapolis, MN 55405

Emma R. Pachuta
Project Manager
Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
2117 West River Road Minneapolis, MN 55411

Subject: Master Plan for Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles

Dear Ms. Pachuta,

As a Kenwood resident and also a church member of Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church, I am compelled to comment on the "Cedar Lake/Lake of the Isles Master Plan". I only heard about it by accident as was the case with the last Park Board plan which was equally objectionable, and addressed a bike path to be added to Kenwood Parkway. I am glad that in both cases, someone alerted me to the plans, but it is distressing that plans like those are not announced more publicly to the people who are affected by them.

The first thing that should always happen when plans are made, is an assessment and discussion of the problem statement. A problem statement which clearly states what is currently not working or challenging is required in order to devise plans to fix the issues that have been raised in a problem statement. I must assume that this very common process was not followed here, because the plans I have looked at are not solving, but rather, creating problems:

Open areas around the lake – Current use

If you spend a lot of time around the lakes, walking, jogging, biking, canoeing, skiing and skating, what you see is that heavy use is made by neighbors and commuters alike of the paths as well as the green spaces. In the summer, families have picnics, students sit in green spaces studying, people read books and papers, play and use these areas in place of backyards that many don't have where they live. There are Yoga classes conducted, and other group activities occur as well. People walk their dogs and gather with people they run into while walking. It can be a very vibrant scene and is what makes the lake and park around it the jewel it is. It makes Minneapolis a unique city because you have usable green space in the middle of a large city. Maybe a two-way bike path could be considered to enhance the space, and maybe there could be more trees, but the way Lake of the Isles "works" right now is in many ways perfect and does not require "fixing". The current situation has created, and is still creating, incredible opportunities and makes the lake an invaluable asset. People who don't live close enough to the lakes come by car and park on the Parkway to access this wonderful park. We know this through the church, because we get "walk-ins" when people walk around the lake and are alerted to our church – they often tell us that its idyllic setting made them want to try it out.

The proposed ideas that will cause problems

Filling in part of the lake – apart from the fact that the lake in its current configuration is beautiful and the envy of people who live in cities without lakes, the lake in its entirety, including the north arm is in use – by people who walk around it, canoe or paddle board on it and also by waterfowl. Why in the world would filling in part of the lake be a positive development?

Closing part of Lake of the Isles Parkway

As mentioned, people who don't live around the lake come to the lake by car (often with their equipment like bikes, canoes, skis, roller blades etc.) and they need to be able to get easy access, and park by the lake as well. Closing off that thoroughfare by the north end would overly tax other side streets which often don't even allow for two-way traffic. Apart from that, it would make it impossible to get to Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church, which is a beacon on the lake and a welcoming place of worship where people come on Sundays and other days for

many reasons, not just for church services. The church houses AA groups. hosts free concerts for the community at large, supports the elderly with Bingo events, makes dinners for the homeless from Our Savior's housing and conducts funerals, baptisms and weddings. It features an outdoor patio that is used by walkers throughout the week. To in any way limit access to this church very clearly creates insurmountable problems for the well-being of the community, spiritual and otherwise.

Community centers, restrooms etc.

As far as the warming house goes, things seem to be working well right now, but if there is a burning need, it would probably not hurt to have something more permanent, as long as it doesn't interfere with the space for people to use and as long as it integrates into the natural look. Restrooms are not needed all around the lake. If the warming house had restrooms, that should be more than sufficient. Outdoor restrooms have a tendency of becoming unusable very quickly. Certainly, such a structure (or any kind of structure) would detract from Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church and the beauty of the building, if it was close to it. The church does keep its doors open to walkers who need a restroom, so more restrooms in the immediate vicinity should not be necessary.

Floating bogs

Again, my question is what problems we are trying to solve. I could imagine that floating bogs would severely curtail activities such as canoeing, paddle boarding, kayaking, maybe fishing – and why would it be necessary to do so? How would such bogs affect the skating and skiing in the winter? And could it curtail activities that might lead to cleaner water? I have seen boats cleaning up the lake in the past – would they be running into these bogs? Has thought been giving to the obstacles such bogs might create?

In closing, the idea that the lake(s) could or should be returned to its "pre-colonial" state is distressing in many regards. Lake of the Isles itself, as far as I know, is a man-made lake, so if we were to go in the pre-colonial direction, we would just fill the whole thing in and completely deprive the population of a beautiful lake. This can't and should not be a serious consideration or direction

for the Park Board or Commission. I can only implore you to reconsider this Master Plan – both Options – and come up with a more realistic and "user friendly" one, which should not be significantly different from the status quo. As a taxpayer, I can also say that a more realistic and less aggressive plan would not cost nearly as much as what Options A and B would cost.

Sincerely,

Susanne Haas

Dear Park Board Members and anyone else who has a say in this, on 3-04-2022:

My maiden name is Kathy Webster and I grew up near the north end of Lake of the Isles.

Our address was 2010 Newton Ave. South. I attended Kenwood Grade School, K-6, and my family also belonged to Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church. When I was old enough, I attended what we called junior high school, and began walking to and from Jefferson Junior High, located at 26th & Hennepin, each day.

So I know the walkways and the ways of that part of Lake of the Isles from my feet to my head to my heart. Walking to school every morning and home every afternoon was imprinted in my being. It was an awesome beginning and end to each and every day.

During those junior high years, my parents moved our family to 2701 Dean Parkway, Dean Boulevard at that time. I continued walking to school daily, but around the OTHER end of the lake. The morning and afternoon walks continued until finishing 9th grade at Jefferson Junior High and continued throughout my high school years at West High School, located at 28th & Hennepin. Again, this daily sojourn around a different part of Lake of the Isles was imprinted in my being.

During these wonder years, I played in Kenwood Park, enjoyed joyous neighborhoods full of families with oodles of kids and skated at Lake of the Isles each winter season. I had friends and knew families from every area around the lake.

I went on to the University of Minnesota and graduated there, finally spending my career of 35 years teaching in the Hopkins School District. My parents continued living on Dean Parkway and attending Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church. So that connection with the lake has continued to be a part of my life.

We saw many changes around Lake of the Isles, some good & some quite disruptive. The traffic used to be two-way around the lake and now it is one-way. The paths used to be in both directions for mixed traffic: those of us on foot, those riding bikes, and maybe an occasional rollerblader! Now the traffic on the paths is even regulated.

I still belong to Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church, though my husband & I live out in Chanhassen now. But I drive to the church 2-3 times a week, for services, choir practice & other activities. So I see what the daily and evening activities around the lake are like these days, too.

What I've learned through all of these years is how fragile our lake is. The roads and paths around the lake and the lake itself serve many purposes. These are things that need to be protected, not ruined and disrupted. There are other locations for you to build your proposed facilities. And there is no good reason to shut down traffic around any section of this lake to accommodate those facilities.

The Park Board should be about improving things around all of our lakes and parks. Why would you consider ruining something beautiful and fragile along the shores of Lake of the Isles? Do your jobs to uplift what is special about our City of Lakes and find a different location to provide whatever facilities you think you need. They do not need to be built along the shores of our beautiful lake, or along the shores of any of our beautiful lakes!

In Earnest,

Kathy Webster Hering (7872 Harvest Lane, Chanhassen, MN 55317) kathyher@iphouse.com

February 25, 2022

Emma R. Pachuta
Project Manager
Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
2117 West River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55411

Dear Ms. Pachuta:

I am treasurer of the church council at Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church (“LOTI”), on the north arm of Lake of the Isles. LOTI has significant concerns about several aspects of the proposed redesign of the parkland at the lake, and I respectfully request that the Board account for these concerns as it moves forward with the planning process. The principal issues are these:

1. Roadway access is essential. Closing the parkway would seriously harm our ability to use the front entrance to the church and, more importantly, would deprive the parsonage of any road access at all, leaving it a landlocked parcel. This would badly impair our ability to access and use the property for regular Sunday worship, weddings, funerals, concerts, and other special events. It would also place an unfair burden on the elderly and disabled, who need easy access to both buildings, not to mention the need for emergency vehicles to access both. Access from multiple points is critical, and parking has always been greatly appreciated.

2. LOTI is a good community member. We open our doors to all. Wholly apart from our regular church activities, we are an important community gathering point. We host multiple AA and other recovery groups on a nearly daily basis, along with concerts, book readings, lectures, and other events. Our ability to continue hosting such events is threatened in the same manner as our worship activities.

3. The church building is important to the park. The church building itself is an historic structure that beautifies the area. Many of our members started out as park users who were struck by the beauty of the building and wanted to explore our worship offerings. We constantly think about how we relate to the lake and how the lake relates to us. Recent additions reflect this, including an outdoor patio that is regularly used by park visitors. The church and the parkland, in tandem, form an island of calm in the middle of a busy city, but we won’t be able to maintain the building to current standards if the Board makes it inaccessible and consequently undercuts our financial stability. We are an important part of the lake’s history, we welcome people of all faiths and backgrounds, and we hope our presence and role is embraced rather than discounted.

4. We are a commuter church. Most of our members don’t live in the neighborhood (and never have historically), so being able to easily reach the church and park their vehicle is essential to the church’s functioning. Cutting off that access would likely curtail our

current attendance and would absolutely limit our potential for future growth. The church itself was built nearly 100 years ago in reliance on the parkway as our primary public access.

5. 21st Street is not an acceptable alternative. 21st Street cannot accommodate our needs. It is too narrow to ever be a major artery, particularly in the wintertime when it cannot accommodate two-way traffic at several points due to snow and ice constriction. Even during the summer two-way traffic is tight. We are already worried that this limits emergency access, but those concerns are lessened now due to the current availability of the parkway. We also think that re-routing all lake traffic to 21st Street would not be a kind thing to do to our residential neighbors or be safe for the school.

6. The proposed activity hub and water treatment plant should not be located directly in front of the church. No one wants to walk out their front door and have public restrooms and a water treatment facility be the first thing they see. Our building is open to all (and has been throughout the pandemic), and many park users have relied on our accessible restrooms for years, with our blessing. We hope the Board would give us some credit for this. If the Board does resolve to build a permanent facility, we would suggest it be located on the south side of the lake where it will not obstruct anyone's view and where its modern design can stand alone and stand out, rather than creating a potentially jarring contrast with our historic church building.

In closing, thank you for your consideration of these issues, and I respectfully request that this letter be made part of the record of public comment related to this process.

Please feel free to reach out to me any time by phone (612-805-0935) if you have any questions or wish to discuss these concerns directly.

Very truly yours,

Ross Bartels
1728 James Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN 55403



March 4, 2022

Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
c/o Emma Pachuta, Senior Planner
EPachuta@minneapolisparks.org

Re: Cedar Lake / Lake of the Isles master plan - draft initial park concepts

Dear Ms. Pachuta,

The Legacy of Nature Alliance (LONA) brings together organizations and individuals with a uniting mission—"to ensure ecosystems are restored and preserved within the metropolitan regional parks system and throughout the entire region to provide high-quality habitat for wildlife and year-round Nature-based opportunities to inspire the next generation of environmental stewards." LONA's regional membership represents twenty-five organizations and numerous individuals, with thousands of people on our collaborative mailing and contact lists. LONA members recognize and value Nature's inherent importance to humans in its ability to purify air, clean and manage of movement of water, mitigate urban heat island effects, provide resources and offer beauty and respite in the biodiversity of life. We appreciate the opportunity to submit comments on the Cedar Lake / Lake of the Isles master plan – draft initial park concepts and to represent a regional point of view.

Community engagement conducted to develop the park concepts included youth, Indigenous people, people with disabilities and their caretakers and Somali community members; all indicating strong support for Nature/habitat. Participants expressed great interest in improving water quality of the lakes, expanding natural and forested areas and establishing more native plants. One of LONA's member organizations, the Urban Bird Collective is indicative of broad community support for Nature; UBC has been convened to provide BIPOC and LGBT communities the benefits of birding and enjoying Nature. Due to the strong community support for Nature and water quality, we suggest further refining the vision statement to "Lake of the Isles and Cedar Lake, as part of the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park, contribute to a vital, urban natural ecosystem with unique recreational opportunities that sustains people, wildlife, wetlands, water bodies and forests. The master plan is a framework to strengthen ecological function and resilience, expand outdoor activities, Nature-based connections, tell authentic stories, and build stronger relationships among humans, wildlife and the lakes."

The broad swaths and parcels of parkland along with Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles, which are included in the Master Plan, are significant to Nature as well as humans. The lakes and surrounding trees provide critical habitat to resident and migratory birds. As indicated in the concept plan, various animals make this area home. LONA appreciates "Protect" as the first guiding principle for the master plans. However, the addition of more trails, boardwalks and buildings will not "Protect" habitat for wildlife, but rather further fragment the space needed for many species to survive. To bring back some of the key species identified in the concept plan, e.g., Acadian Flycatcher, Blanding's Turtle (LONA's symbol) and Virginia Rail, there must be adequate habitat in terms of space, food and protection from predators.

For example, we suggest removing the pedestrian trail near the lakeshore as part of restoring the littoral zone. Move pedestrians to the bike trail and expand and improve the bike trail along the roadway. The parking lots could be restored to Maple-Basswood Forest encouraging more biking, bussing and walking to the park, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve water quality. We also suggest minimizing or eliminating any

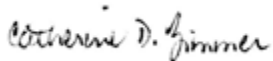
boardwalks as this invites incursion into fragile habitats. As you continue to refine the design concepts, it is imperative that a credentialed ecologist guides the protection, enhancement and restoration of Nature.

With the aid of a restoration ecologist, we recommend that opportunities to expand the tree canopy be optimized throughout the parklands along with pollinator gardens. The original Maple-Basswood forest ecotype can provide many plants suitable for pollinators including spring ephemerals such as Bloodroot and Jacob's Ladder and, the flowers of Basswood are wonderfully aromatic pollinator food. Additionally, we support the strategic expansion of the littoral edges to improve habitat and storm-water management. Existing healthy trees should be preserved and not displaced. Keep paths simple and minimal allowing quiet access the natural wonder of urban forests and wildlife that inhabit the parklands, and to reach the lakes at specified low-impact access points. We do not believe additional buildings beyond a low impact bath house at Cedar Lake be added. In conversations with educators, they have suggested exploration is best accomplished on site with follow up back in the classroom. Also keep in mind the need for maintenance of natural and built features. We request that all design concepts be evaluated based on their impact on the health of Nature and water quality.

It is our understanding that approximately thirty-eight acres of nearby land is available from Metropolitan Council. This area is ripe for restoration and can be maintained as forest and prairie. Land such as this is vital to mitigating climate challenges in an urban environment. Please pursue this property for parklands and include it in the Cedar Lake / Lake of the Isles master plan process with an emphasis on ecosystem resilience.

Humans are facing climate and extinction crises. The magnitude of these crises cannot be overstated; it is imperative we address them immediately. Design concepts that protect, restore and enhance wildlife habitat, Nature-based recreation and water quality are the best choices for the entire community. Nature provides far more benefits than permanent structures, concrete and turf. We entreat the project team to prioritize the enhancement and restoration of Nature with an emphasis on water quality and historical ecotypes such as Maple-Basswood Forest.

Sincerely,



Catherine Zimmer, coordinator
Legacy of Nature Alliance:

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis
Bee Safe MPLS
Bush Lake Chapter Izaak Walton League of America
Cedar Isles Dean Neighborhood Association
Environmental Friends of Veterans Memorial Park
Friends Minneapolis Wildlife
Friends of Cullen Nature Preserve and Bird Sanctuary
Friends of Lake Hiawatha
Friends of Roberts Bird Sanctuary
Friends of the Parks & Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County
Stand Up for Property Rights Big Woods Wetlands
Urban Bird Collective
Wilderness in the City

Friends of Thomas Lowry Park
Kids for Saving Earth
Lakeville Friends Of the Environment
Lower Phalen Creek Project
Minnehaha Falls Landscaping
Minnesota Citizens for the Protection of Migratory Birds
Minnesota Herpetological Society
Minnesota Public Lands Coalition
Nature South St Paul
Neighborhood Greening
Pollinator Friendly Alliance
Sierra Club - Forest and Wildlife Stewards

CC: Ms. Meg Forney, MPRB President, mforney@minneapolisparcs.org
Ms. Elizabeth Schaffer, MPRB District 4, eshaffer@minneapolisparcs.org
Ms. Catherine Abene, MPRB District 6, cabene@minneapolisparcs.org

PHYLLIS M. DAHL
3148 Dupont Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55408
(612) 823-8641

March 8, 2022

Ms. Emma R. Pachuta
Project Manager
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
2117 West River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55411

RE: Lake of The Isles Proposal

Dear Ms. Pachuta,

I have been a member of Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church for over 65 years. I was recently informed of the Park Board's proposal regarding the closing of the parkway in front of the church.

I am 91 years of age and have difficulty walking any distance. Closing the parkway and eliminating parking accessibility would make my church attendance very difficult, if not impossible.

I also hope that you will reconsider the placement of the proposed bathroom structure away from in front of the church.

Our council president, Marty Carlson, has sent you a letter stating many reasons why the Park Board should reconsider this proposal and I pray you will read his letter and decide that closing the parkway is not in the best interest of the neighborhood or the church.

Respectfully,

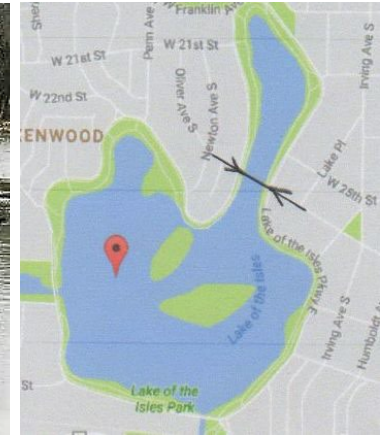
Phyllis M. Dahl

A Walkway Across Lake of the Isles

--David Andersen 612 872-9529, 2/26/22



An attractive pedestrian and bike causeway across the neck of the north lagoon of Lake of the Isles would shorten walking distances to the light rail station and the businesses on Hennepin, and add parking for the warming house. It would also reduce the walking distance around Lake of the Isles by almost a mile, allowing more folks to walk the lake. Federal transportation funding for this type of project is being offered¹.



The width of the lagoon south of the warming house is approximately 250 feet. An earthen causeway could be constructed of rocks, sand and soil. It would support a paved surface between sides of native plants. The causeway would be wide enough to accommodate a maintenance truck or a snow plow. It would be only a few feet above the water so railings would not be needed. The causeway would include an arched bridge for the passage of fish, canoes, small boats and skiers.



Nine Mile Creek



Minnehaha Creek



Bde Maka Ska

A variety of bridge styles is available. Local examples are shown above. A small 30-foot bridge could be constructed offsite and delivered by truck.

###

¹ <https://metro council.org/Transportation/Planning-2/Transportation-Funding/Regional-Solicitation.aspx>