VISION PLAN

CHAPTER 5

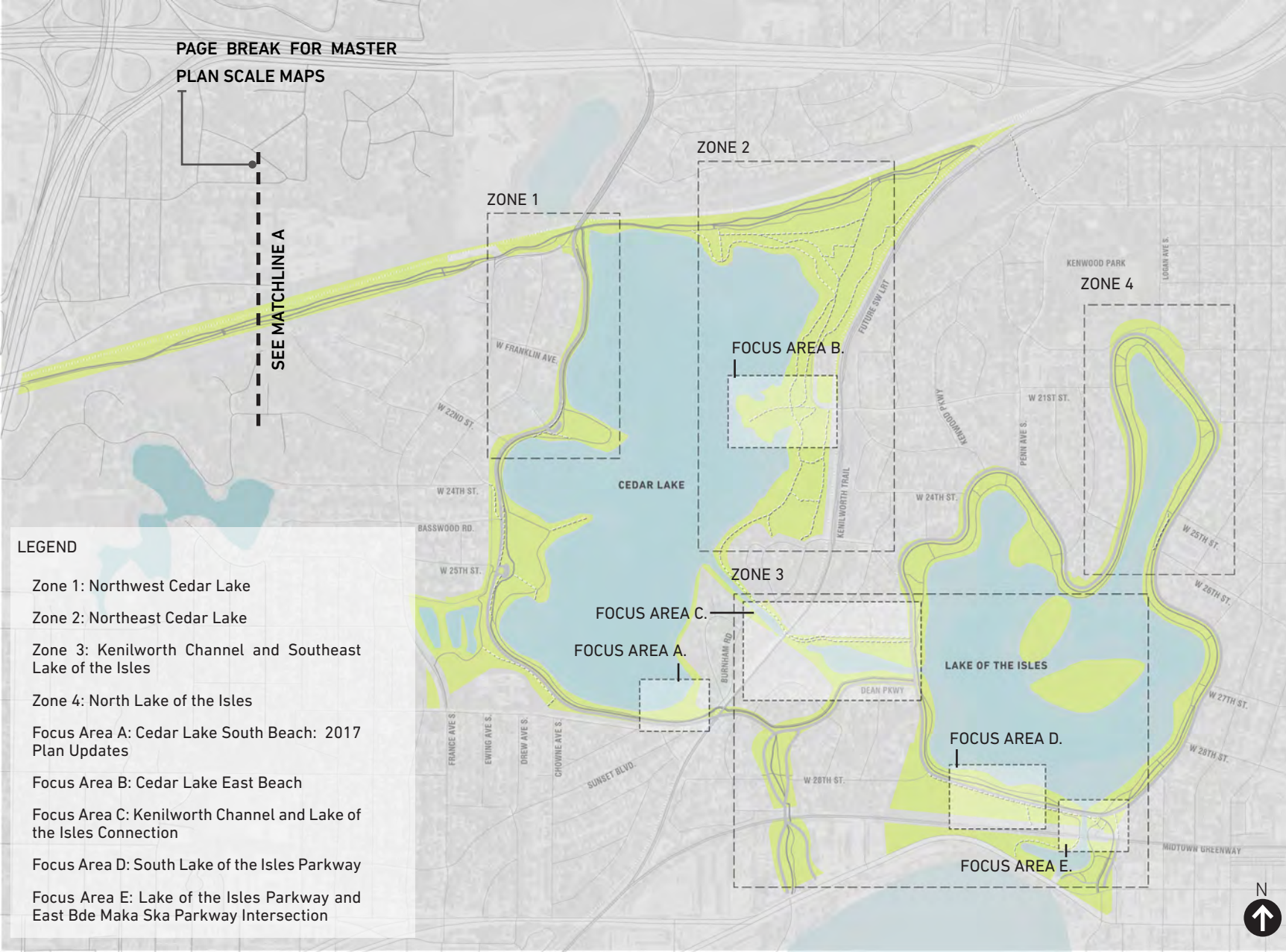## 5.1 OVERVIEW

Trails at Lake of the Isles

Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles are defined by their unique character within the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park that snake through the heart of Minneapolis. Cedar is known as the wilder and more natural lake while Lake of the Isles has formal lawns with walking and biking trails. Both have a very different character to their sister lakes to the south, Lake Harriet and Bde Maka Ska, and Brownie Lake to the north. The plan also includes Dean Parkway, known for its lawns, trails, and being a connector between Bde Maka Ska and Lake of the Isles. A portion of Cedar Lake Regional Trail is also in the plan, providing direct walking and biking access between St. Louis Park to the Mississippi River.

PLAN / CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

This chapter provides a detailed look at the next 20 to 30 years of proposed improvements for Cedar Lake, Lake of the Isles, Dean Parkway, and a portion of the Cedar Lake Regional Trail. A vision and guiding principles for the project area lay the foundation for project planning in Section 5.2. Recommendations start in Section 5.3 with project-wide guidance followed by project-wide design in 5.4, and 5.5 and 5.6 finish off with detailed design recommendations for zones and focus areas at Cedar Lake then Lake of the Isles, Kenilworth Channel, and Dean Parkway. See Figure 5.1 for the breakdown of zones and focus areas throughout the project area.

Recommendations, outlined at both the project-wide scale and through zones and focus areas, describe additional detail, prioritize improving water quality, aim to honor the unique character of each lake, and respond to CAC, community, staff, and agency feedback received throughout the planning process. Some improvements shown will require further site investigation to confirm feasibility prior to detailed design and construction.

Figure 5.1: Plan Enlargements Framework

LEGEND

Zone 1: Northwest Cedar Lake

Zone 2: Northeast Cedar Lake

Zone 3: Kenilworth Channel and Southeast Lake of the Isles

Zone 4: North Lake of the Isles

Focus Area A: Cedar Lake South Beach: 2017 Plan Updates

Focus Area B: Cedar Lake East Beach

Focus Area C: Kenilworth Channel and Lake of the Isles Connection

Focus Area D: South Lake of the Isles Parkway

Focus Area E: Lake of the Isles Parkway and East Bde Maka Ska Parkway Intersection

5.2 VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This section will outline the vision and guiding principles that lay the foundation for the themes, basis of design, project-wide recommendations and focus-area recommendations for the park vision plan.

PURPOSE

The design aims to sensitively respond to the general engagement received since 2019 and the various feedback that was received during community comment periods, surveys, CAC meetings, site walks, and workshops throughout the concept alternatives and preferred plan phases.

The Vision and Guiding Principles set the stage for concept development and initiatives. The **Vision** describes what the park will be in the future while the **Guiding Principles** suggest how the park will achieve that vision. Guiding principles embody core values and offer action statements for the project that guide decisions throughout the planning process.

VISION

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 experiences that protect, connect, and sustain people, wildlife, and natural resources, while maintaining the health of the lakes.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The six guiding principles that embody core values for the Cedar-Isles Plan are:

PROTECT

Protect and enhance parkland and water bodies while adapting to a changing climate.

INVITE

Welcome diverse users by creating a sense of arrival, intuitive orientation, education for visitors, and ensuring safe connections to and through the park for both people and wildlife.

CONNECT

Create flexible, safe, and clear circulation networks for all transportation modes to clarify and improve links between people, wildlife, and natural resources

TELL STORIES

Acknowledge and respond to layers of history related to the land and lakes, and value authentic stories through education, interpretation, and stewardship.

ENGAGE

Create inclusive and equitable programs and activities that reflect the unique character of each lake and provide welcoming and safe spaces for visitors to experience the natural environment.

RESPECT

Honor the uniqueness of each lake by maintaining current uses and valued features, across seasons, while accommodating desired improvements to strengthen relationships with the land and lakes.

Luminary Loppet on Lake of the Isles, TEN x TEN

5.3 PROJECT-WIDE GUIDANCE

This section outlines high level guidance and recommendations for the Cedar-Isles plan. It informs the project wide and lake-specific recommendations in the following sections (5.4 - 5.6), and will also guide implementation of the recommendations. Guidance is divided into the following topics: Water Quality, Natural Resources, Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Management, Access and Circulation, Accessibility, Safety, Interpretation, Historic and Cultural Resources, and Program and Amenities. While guidance has been incorporated under each topic, the section should be reviewed holistically to account for the overlap across topic areas. Many sources informed the guidance for this section, including the Community Advisory Committee, working groups, community engagement, best practices, and existing MPRB policy documents.

WATER QUALITY

To comprehensively address current and future water quality improvement opportunities for Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles, the project team worked with a water quality subcommittee of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to develop goals across three planning scales: lake, park plan, and watershed (listed smallest to largest scale). Learn more about the Water Quality CAC Subcommittee in the Community Engagement Chapter and view the final recommendations document in Appendix A.

LAKE MANAGEMENT PLAN-LEVEL GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

These goals and recommendations reference and build upon the Clean Water Partnership (CWP) goals (see Section 4.2) and current water quality trends, and aim mitigate effects of climate change.

Lake Management Plan Water Quality Goal 1: Manage Lake of the Isles as an ecologically healthy, shallow lake and:

- Maintain phosphorus levels below 40 micrograms per Liter (ug/L)

small

LAKE MANAGEMENT SCALE — Strategies implemented internally within a lake

PARK MASTER PLAN SCALE — Strategies to be implemented on parkland within the project boundary

WATERSHED SCALE — Cross-jurisdictional work implemented througout the areas draining to the lakes
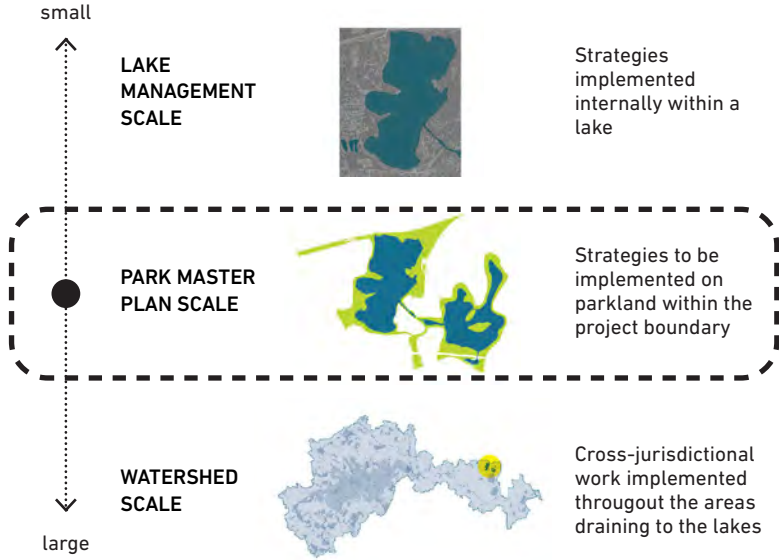
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Figure 5.2: Water Quality planning at three scales.

- Establish and maintain diverse native and adapted, non-invasive aquatic plants
- Establish and maintain aquatic food web
- Prevent harmful blue-green algae blooms

Lake Management Plan Water Quality Recommendation 1A: Develop a lake management plan for Lake of the Isles to assess lake health and the drivers of water quality and to manage in-lake nutrients, the littoral zones, and shorelines.

Lake Management Plan Water Quality Goal 2: Manage Cedar Lake as an ecologically healthy, deep lake and:

Geese along Kenilworth Channel. MPRB

- Bring phosphorus levels below 25 micrograms per Liter (ug/L)
- Establish and maintain diverse native and adapted, non-invasive aquatic plants
- Establish and maintain aquatic food web
- Prevent harmful blue-green algae blooms

Lake Management Plan Water Quality Recommendation 2A: Develop a lake management plan for Cedar Lake to assess lake health and the drivers of water quality and to manage in-lake nutrients, the littoral zones, and shorelines.

PARK PLAN LAKE GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goals and recommendations at this scale are largely addressed within the park plan maps and design, which is outlined later in this chapter.

Park Plan Water Quality Goal 1: Address stormwater runoff from all hard surfaces on parkland

Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 1A: Treat stormwater runoff from paved surfaces on parkland including parkways and parking lots before it runs into the lake

Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 1B: Limit paved surfaces and, where appropriate, convert to pervious

Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 1C: Perform enhanced sweeping of all paved surfaces on park property

Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 1D: Restore soil health, including restoring compacted soil that currently provides limited infiltration

Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 1E: Eliminate exposed soil on park land except established beaches and turtle nesting areas

Bald Eagle on Lake of the Isles. MPRB

Park Plan Water Quality Goal 2: Reduce chloride, trash, sediment, and other pollutants from entering the lakes

Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 2A: Reduce chloride (salt) use through continuing to condense maintained paths within the winter networks

Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 2B: Minimize to the extent practical, use of chloride-based de-icing materials on hard surfaces within the park

Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 2C: Provide education to staff and the public around impacts of chloride and training on the best practices and timing for deicing application

Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 2D: Perform enhanced sweeping of all paved surfaces on park property to remove trash, leaves, sediment and other pollutants

Park Plan Water Quality Goal 3: Maintain and stabilize shoreline with native vegetation in all areas except for formal access points and identified view sheds

Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 3A: Establish a naturalized lake buffer with a minimum height of one foot in all areas where water and land access is not needed. (above shoreline)
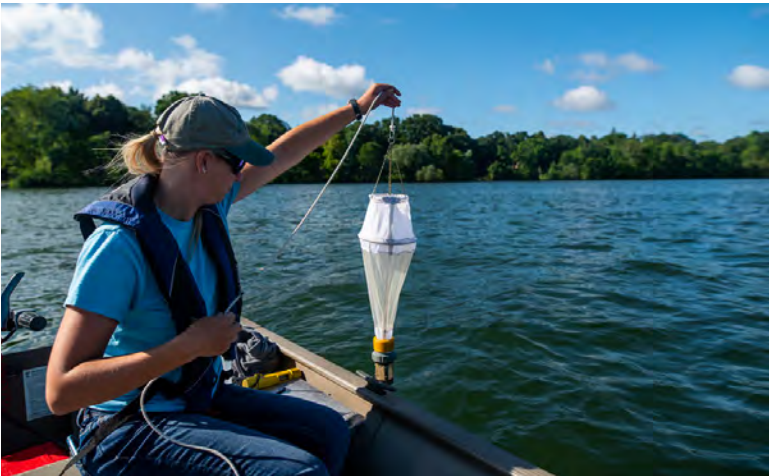
Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 3B: Naturalize the littoral fringe with emergent vegetation in all areas where lake access is not needed (below shore)

Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 3C: Reduce sedimentation into the lake from adjacent erosion and runoff by ensuring park soils and slopes remain stabilized and vegetated

Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 3D: Formalize the location of water access points and clearly identify them

Lake of the Isles Shoreline

Lake Water Quality Monitoring. MPRB

Milfoil Harvesting. MPRB

Park Plan Water Quality Goal 4: Maximize and restore habitat (terrestrial and aquatic) to improve health of the lake and have spaces for wildlife.

Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 4A: Restore and improve natural areas that have no interaction with park visitors (ie: islands at Lake of the Isles) to higher functioning plant communities for improved wildlife habitat

Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 4B: Restore and improve natural areas that interact with park visitors (ie: northeast forest at Cedar Lake) to higher functioning plant communities

Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 4C: Consider fisheries sampling to routinely determine the Fish-based Index of Biological Integrity (F-IBI)

Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 4D: Determine target wildlife species for each lake and develop biological monitoring program

Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 4E: Reestablish native, non-invasive, and adapted rooted aquatic vegetation communities

Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 4F: Control invasive aquatic plant species including water milfoil and curlyleaf pondweed to improve water quality and maintain recreational access

Park Plan Water Quality Goal 5: Continue to meet state aquatic recreation standards at Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles

Park Plan Water Quality Recommendation 5A: Reduce water quality impacts from pets, geese, and anthropogenic sources

WATERSHED GOALS

One of the primary influences of water quality in these lakes is the watershed, or the water that enters the lakes from pipes upstream, sometimes from miles away. In order to make a significant impact on improving water quality for these lakes, watershed runoff must be addressed. Partnership and collaboration between relevant local, regional, and state agencies will be critical to achieving watershed-wide mitigation of polluted stormwater runoff.

Watershed Water Quality Goal 1: Utilize the water quality-focused Cedar-Isles plan with specific measurable goals, objectives and outcomes as a MPRB case study on how to track and evaluate implementation of a park plan

Watershed Water Quality Goal 2: Formalize a committee with regional community and agency representation to continue monitoring and developing rapid solutions for water quality and quantity in the face of a changing climate

Watershed Water Quality Goal 3: Reinvigorate the Clean Water Partnership (CWP) and renew efforts by partners to meet the CWP goals and assist the MPRB to achieve the lake water quality goals defined in this plan. This effort should include, but is not limited to, the following items:

   Watershed Water Quality Recommendation 3A: Establish new regulatory controls aimed at eliminating the introduction of pollutants into water bodies

   Watershed Water Quality Recommendation 3B: Monitor and evaluate existing watershed infrastructure to ensure it's still working and has the capacity to convey runoff safely under a changing climate

   Watershed Water Quality Recommendation 3C: Reduce all pollutants (chloride, phosphorous, trash, and sediment) from entering each lake

Watershed Water Quality Recommendation 3D: Conduct watershed water quality and quantity modeling studies to determine priority areas for reducing stormwater volumes and pollutant loading and identify new opportunities and locations to implement stormwater management strategies

Watershed Water Quality Goal 4: Achieve broad community knowledge and understanding about the health of each lake, the factors impacting lake health and ways they can help protect the lakes

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Water Quality Recommendation A: Consistently address invasive species for existing and new landscape features

Water Quality Recommendation B: Develop and implement invasive species management strategy

Water Quality Recommendation C: Funding requests will include sufficient maintenance

Water Quality Recommendation D: Continue and/or expand water quality public education programming. Topics could include, but are not limited to the following:

• Water quality salt impacts on water bodies regarding proper waste reduction and impacts on water bodies

• No feeding of waterfowl

• Dog waste collection and environmental impacts from dog waste

• Strategies about how to decrease waste and plastic pollution

•

NATURAL RESOURCES

The following goals and strategies for natural resources are for the whole project area. There's also a "Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Management" section which includes additional natural resources recommendations for Cedar Lake Park developed by a working group.

NATURAL RESOURCES GOALS

Natural Resources Goal 1: Prioritize protection of sensitive natural resources to foster resilient and biodiverse natural areas

Natural Resources Goal 2: Utilize current conditions of soils and plant communities to inform recommendations; this is an urban forest with a history of disturbance which impacts restoration strategies

Natural Resources Goal 3: Restore diversity by using the DNR's Native Plant Community Guides as the best model of pre-European plant communities containing high biodiversity and low human disturbances

Natural Resources Goal 4: Maximize, improve, and restore habitat (both land- and water-based) to improve the health of the parkland and lakes

Natural Resources Goal 5: Provide inclusive and innovative programming that builds community and connects diverse park visitors with each other and to nature while protecting the natural environment

Natural Resources Goal 6: Retain historically significant lawns while also increasing natural areas

Ducks on Lake of the Isles. MPRB

NATURAL RESOURCES RECOMMENDATIONS

Natural Resources Recommendation A: Develop and implement Natural Resource Management Plans for Cedar Lake Park and Lake of the Isles

Natural Resources Recommendation B: Protect and expand the tree canopy by preserving healthy trees as much as possible while also planting new trees

Natural Resources Recommendation C: Continue to strengthen relationships with volunteers to enhance and increase management of natural areas

Natural Resources Recommendation D: Educate staff and the community on critical issues facing the city and region, specifically:

• Indigenous acknowledgment, history, rights, culture and perspectives

• Environmental and ecological issues

• Health and wellness benefits of parks

• Potential linkages between park investment, gentrification, and displacement

• The benefits of, threats to, and care of the urban tree canopy, birds, and wildlife

• Strategies about how to decrease waste and plastic pollution

• Invasive species management and prevention

• Climate change impacts and resiliency

• Shared public responsibility for waste reduction, water quality, and city-wide tree canopy

• Park safety and security

Natural Resources Recommendation E: Reduce lawn areas and replace with other landscape types, as identified, to increase habitat and natural areas as well as improve water quality

Natural Resources Recommendation F: Increase public and staff education about wildlife and ecology through interpretive and educational signage, classes, events, printed and digital media, or other strategies

Natural Resources Recommendation G: Support a healthy urban ecosystem through monitoring and improving air, soil, water, and habitat quality

Natural Resources Recommendation H: Mitigate harmful disruptions to the ecosystem by ensuring new and renovated lighting adheres to the following principles:

• Make sure that light fixtures are fully shielded and down-facing

• Mount lighting as low as is practical

• In sensitive areas, consider Certified Wildlife Lighting like Low Pressure Sodium (LPS) or narrow-spectrum amber LEDs with a wavelength longer than 560 nm

• Where LED lighting is necessary, choose warm-white or filtered LEDs with a correlated color temperature (CCT) of 3,000K or less

• Implement adaptive controls such as automatic timers, dimmers, and sensor-activated lighting

• Consider dimming or turning off non-essential light fixtures when the park is closed

• Utilize reflective striping on trails and reflective markers in other areas to supplement existing light sources without requiring additional ones

Natural Resources Recommendation I: Expand amount of managed natural areas within project area

Natural Resources Recommendation J: Identify existing trees during design and protect trees during construction in order to minimize tree loss, especially of very large trees

CEDAR LAKE PARK NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

During the park planning process, members of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and public formed a community-led working group to developed goals and recommendations divided across three planning levels (land management, park plan, high-level regional park) focused on protecting and enhancing land in Cedar Lake Park. While the goals and recommendations were presented and approved by the CAC, not all of them are included in the park plan document due to conflicts with MPRB policy direction and management practices. The goals and recommendations listed below are what has been carried forward either as originally written or in a modified form. View the Cedar Lake Park Working Group final recommendations as presented, and approved by the CAC, in Appendix A.

Oak Savanna. MPRB

LAND MANAGEMENT GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CEDAR LAKE PARK NATURAL RESOURCES

Land Management for Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Goal 1: Manage natural resources in and adjacent to Cedar Lake Park as an ecologically healthy landscape for people, plants and wildlife, by developing and implementing (as stated in the Park Board's Phase II Natural Areas Plan) a detailed Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP) for Cedar Lake Park.

Land Management for Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 1A: Grow staff expertise and capacity to expand and enhance natural resources management through additional positions such as: ecologists, biologists and other qualified technical personnel

Land Management for Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 1B: Expand staff and institutional capacity

Cedar Lake Retention Pond

and skills to increase and sustain volunteer engagement in restoration and management

Land Management for Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 1C: Improve the health of existing tree stands and expand the tree canopy with native and adapted North American species

Land Management for Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 1D: Establish diverse plants for each type of plant community

Land Management for Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 1E: Support pollinators and other wildlife by minimizing use of pesticides to protect the food web

Land Management for Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 1F: Use non-toxic best management practices to control invasive species whenever possible

Land Management for Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 1G: Strengthen and protect a terrestrial and aquatic food web (including littoral zones) with diverse species of site-appropriate trees and plants

Land Management for Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 1H: Monitor informal trails and lake access points and take action when necessary to protect wildlife habitat and prevent or mitigate damage to the shoreline and plants

Land Management for Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 1I: Acquire remnant SWLRT land for use as an undeveloped natural area

Land Management for Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 1J: Consider the natural environment when determining scale, design, and materials of improvements and trails

Prairie Grasses and Flowers. MPRB

Land Management for Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 1K: Address trash and sanitation needs year-round with high-quality, well-maintained facilities. Provide access for people and vehicles while considering the park visitor experience

Land Management for Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 1L: Develop an invasive species management strategy, in keeping with IPM principles, working with state, local, and academic partners advisory groups

PARK PLAN-LEVEL GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CEDAR LAKE PARK NATURAL RESOURCES

Park Plan-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Goal 1: Maintain parkland to thrive ecologically and continue to provide natural resource-based recreational opportunities for park visitors.

Park Plan-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 1A: Maintain and protect plant communities and prevent erosion using trails, natural borders, and designated access points and activities

Park Plan-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 1B: Design low-profile naturalistic signage to provide wayfinding and park guidelines

Park Plan Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Management Recommendation 1C: Formalize a natural/soft surface trail network for pedestrians that protects plant communities and wildlife habitat.

Park Plan-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 1D: Direct bikers to regional bike trails (Cedar Lake, Kenilworth, and Grand Rounds) with signage and other tools.

Park Plan-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 1E: Minimize built structures in the park, and design site amenities within the context of the natural environment and a natural shoreline.

Park Plan-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Goal 2: Maximize and restore habitat (terrestrial and aquatic) to improve the health of the parkland and lake and ensure healthy spaces for wildlife and nature-based recreation

Park Plan-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 2A: Enhance natural areas to ensure high-functioning plant communities

Park Plan-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 2B: Develop and update baseline data on wildlife in the parks, including birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, insects, fish, and invertebrates, using citizen science, Bio Blitzes, and other techniques

Goldfinch in prairie flowers. MPRB

Park Plan-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 2C: Establish and maintain natural areas in a manner that prioritizes the protection and enhancement of habitat for wildlife likely to use the areas

Park Plan-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 2D: Apply best management practices to reduce threats to birds and other wildlife, with consideration for lighting and noise pollution, and expanded protections during nesting and migration periods

Park Plan-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 2E: Apply science-based monitoring and protocols to minimize pesticide use

Park Plan-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 2F: Provide alternative ways to experience the project area in areas where only natural surface trails exist or where trails cannot be made universally accessible

Park Plan-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Goal 3: Provide inclusive and innovative programming that builds community and connects diverse park visitors with each other and to Nature while protecting the natural environment.

Park Plan-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 3A: Continue to use effective outreach and communication channels to inform visitors and the general public about events, programs, and other park activities

Park Plan-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 3B: Use outreach and communication channels to connect and educate people about the park as a natural area

Park Plan-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 3C: Maintain and support existing nature-based programs for youth (such as the DNR School Forest) that inspire, educate and equip people to become stewards of our parks

Park Plan-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 3D: Reduce barriers to program participation by people of all abilities

Park Plan-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 3E: Partner with organizations to conduct outreach and offer programs, including nearby neighborhood associations (e.g., Cedar-Isles-Dean, Bryn Mawr, Kenwood), stewardship groups (e.g., Cedar Lake Park Association, Friends of Cedar Lake, Friends of Cedar Lake Point Beach), and others (such as the Loppet Foundation, Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis, and environmental justice organizations)

A group practicing paddling on land as part of a canoeing program. MPRB

Cedar Lake in the Winter. MPRB

Park Plan-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Recommendation 3F: Recognize and actively support volunteer Park Stewards and organizations in their efforts to positively impact ecological function

HIGH-LEVEL REGIONAL PARK GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

High-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Management Goal 1: Achieve broad community understanding and support of the environment and ecological challenges at Cedar Lake Park, factors impacting biodiversity, and ways people can help protect our parklands

High-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Management Recommendation 1A: Maintain pedestrian trail network with naturalistic signage, fencing and other cues of care to protect plants and wildlife habitat

High-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Management Recommendation 1B: Implement strategies and practices to manage the spread of invasive species into natural areas

High-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Management Recommendation 1C: Partner with the community to develop and deliver site-specific and seasonal nature-based education programs and outdoor events (e.g., naturalist, birding, canoeing)

High-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Management Recommendation 1D: Promote enjoyment of Cedar Lake Park for its unique character as a naturalistic environment

High-Level Cedar Lake Park Natural Resources Management Recommendation 1E: Encourage and enable visitors to help protect Nature, manage trash, and reduce damage

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

To discuss circulation related topics in greater detail during the preferred park concept phase, the project team worked with a circulation subcommittee of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) who then developed goals and recommendations for the park plan. Many of the recommendations from this subcommittee were specific to the design and have been incorporated into the park plan and zoom-in recommendations in sections 5.4, 5.5, and 5.6. Recommendations not represented through design are included below along with the subcommittee's goals. The final recommendations are in Appendix A. There are goals and recommendations below that are in addition to recommendations from the subcommittee.

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION GOALS

Access and Circulation Goal 1: Align circulation infrastructure and amenities with the park plan's vision and guiding principles

Access and Circulation Goal 2: Improve circulation and access for park visitors while protecting water quality and wildlife habitat and prioritizing visitor safety in this order: pedestrians, bicycles/roller skaters/skateboarders, electric micro-mobility (ex: scooters, bikes, hover boards), motorized vehicles

Access and Circulation Goal 3: Clarify circulation networks and links among people, wildlife, and natural resources with low-impact signage and other tools

Access and Circulation Goal 4: Preserve and protect natural and cultural assets to protect the regionally unique and character-defining features of the project area

Access and Circulation Goal 5: Provide clear, intuitive ways for people to move through the project area in light of the anticipated increase in visits from the new light rail 21st Street Station

Access and Circulation Goal 6: Expand mobility, access, and accessibility for people of all backgrounds, abilities, and choice of transportation

Access and Circulation Goal 7: Enhance user safety and reduce conflicts

Access and Circulation Goal 8: Enhance existing connections and thoroughfares frequently used to enter the park. Visitors should feel welcomed, engaged, and confident in navigating their route and experience upon entering the park

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Access and Circulation Recommendation A: Formalize heavily-used ad hoc trails with soft or paved pedestrian and bicycle connections

Soft Surface Trail. MPRB.

Access and Circulation Recommendation B: Naturalize ad hoc trails that are not identified as formalized trails in the park plan

Access and Circulation Recommendation C: When possible, separate bike and pedestrian paths

Access and Circulation Recommendation D: Expand trail options to provide access to previously inaccessible or disconnected areas of parkland

Access and Circulation Recommendation E: Reconfigure, improve, and/or widen bicycle and pedestrian trails to accommodate increased user demand and provide better access to amenities

Access and Circulation Recommendation F: Create viewing areas for users to safely pull away from high-traffic zones

Access and Circulation Recommendation G: For paved trails, provide a minimum width of 8 feet for two-way bike paths and 6 feet for pedestrian paths with 10 feet for bike paths and 8 feet for pedestrian paths preferred

INTERSECTION RECOMMENDATIONS

Many members of the public noted current conflicts with vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians at intersections, and as the park adds more users, potential conflicts could increase. To improve safety and reduce conflicts, a number of intersections have been identified for improvements. See Figure 5.8 in Section 5.4 for proposed enhanced intersection locations.

Intersection Recommendation A: Implement traffic calming strategies at intersections next to multimodal trails such as:

- Raised crosswalks or speed tables
- Enhanced crossing markings
- Narrowed crossings

Mode-Separated Striping at Crosswalks. MPRB.

- Curb extensions
- High visibility, mode-separate striping at crosswalks
- Forward stop bars at all stop signs
- Signage alerting drivers of trail crossings

Intersection Recommendation B: At roadway crossings of a trail, widen curb ramps and expand waiting areas to accommodate increased queuing at intersections

TRANSIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Transit Recommendation A: Following the opening of the light rail station at 21st Street, evaluate trail network for potential modifications to mitigate any potential negative impacts to the park and natural spaces

Transit Recommendation B: Provide well-located wayfinding signage identifying the nearest park or trail access points and attractions near frequently used transit stops to facilitate travel and help generate awareness of the park and trail area for transit riders

Transit Recommendation C: When redesigning an intersection, consider the location of the current transit stop and ensure that it is sited in an ideal location, has easy, well-signed, ADA-accessible connections to the project area, and is designed with rider comfort in mind

WAYFINDING AND SIGNAGE RECOMMENDATIONS

Implementation of a more robust wayfinding system can have a major impact on how comfortable visitors feel upon arrival at the park and while circumnavigating the lakes. Wayfinding can attract new visitors by making them aware of near-by destinations within the park.

New wayfinding will be especially important at welcome entry points and trail and parkway intersections, where the Grand Rounds, Cedar Lake Regional Trail, Midtown Greenway and parkways connect to each other within the project area. Wayfinding will be essential at the new W 21st Street Station located between Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles and the Bryn Mawr Station to welcome and orient visitors arriving via lightrail.

Another important area for wayfinding signage will be at Cedar Lake throughout the natural areas to the north, east, and south of Cedar Lake East Beach, where formalized soft surface trails and a new soft surface bike connection aim to reduce user conflicts and protect the natural environment as much as possible.

In addition to the existing MPRB and Grand Rounds signage, Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles should expand its wayfinding to better serve its mix of neighborhood and regional users, who may not be familiar with local destinations, near-by recreation offerings, or resources related to safe uses of the lakes.

Wayfinding and Signage Recommendation A: Develop a wayfinding and signage plan to help design, site, and implement new signs

Intersection of Lake of the Isles Parkway and Franklin Avenue. MPRB

Intersection of Dean Parkway and Lake of the Isles Parkway. MPRB

Wayfinding and Signage Recommendation B: Evaluate the existing wayfinding network to ensure that signage is located at welcome entry points, access points, and on bridges

Wayfinding and Signage Recommendation C: Note nearby neighborhood business nodes, civic destinations, libraries, and parks on signage at welcome entry points, in order to connect trail users to the broader City

Wayfinding and Signage Recommendation D: Show trail options that can include information about distances, accessibility and difficulty levels so that trail users can cater routes to ability

Wayfinding and Signage Recommendation E: For paddlers, provide information on distances, destinations, safety protocols, and water quality both online and on-site at each of the formal water access points

Wayfinding and Signage Recommendation F: To minimize shoreline erosion and disturbance, clearly delineate formal access points so that they are clear and understandable to visitors

Wayfinding and Signage Recommendation G: Provide information on stewardship at formal water access points, soft surface trailheads, and beaches to help inform users of ways that they can help maintain Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles' natural resources, while still enjoying the lakes, trails and park

Wayfinding and Signage Recommendation H: Ensure that signage is low profile and efficiently sited to avoid visual disturbance of the natural surroundings

Wayfinding and Signage Recommendation I: Establish clear wayfinding and signage to discourage bicycle use on the soft surface trails (except for designated trail in northwest Cedar Lake)

Wayfinding and Signage Recommendation J: Provide information in multiple languages to increase access for all users

Enhanced Welcome Entry Point. Source: San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance

Enhanced Welcome Entry Point. Source: Made by Landmark

Wayfinding and Signage Recommendation K: Wayfinding and signage should be well-designed and placed, and work to:

- Help visitors find their way

- Clarify users for different trail types to reduce conflicts and promote both bicycle and pedestrian friendly environments

- Link resources, destinations, and amenities

- Enhance the park's unique identity

- Improve connections to and between the Lakes

Wayfinding and Signage Recommendation L: Accommodate digital wayfinding opportunities

Wayfinding and Signage Recommendation M: Remove obsolete signs and replace old signs to achieve a unified signage look and aesthetic across the project area

Grand Rounds Wayfinding Signage

ACCESSIBILITY

The number of people who have a disability is constantly in flux, for it's the one population segment that someone can join at any time. But accessibility is not just about meeting the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). A person born with a condition that impairs their mobility, someone with arthritis, a woman 8-months pregnant, a dog walker, a double-stroller wielding parent, and a senior or elder all have different needs when using parks and trails. Considering only a traditionally fit and able person when designing the park is very limiting. For this reason, it is important to provide both accessible and ADA accessible routes, amenities, and features that allow all people to feel welcome, safe, and comfortable accessing and using the Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles park.

ACCESSIBLITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Accessibility Recommendation A: Utilize design cues to clearly mark all transitions to non-accessible trails

Accessibility Recommendation B: Provide even-footed, soft surfacing on trails to maintain permeability while providing accessibility to as many users as possible

Accessibility Recommendation C: Provide alternative ways to experience parkland in areas where only soft surface trails exist or where trails cannot be made universally accessible

Accessibility Recommendation D: Include information on maps and signage about trail slope and surface, as well as alternate accessible routes, loops, entrances, and exits

Accessibility Recommendation E: As intersections get safety upgrades, adjust crossings to be more accommodating of all users through proper alignment of curb ramps, adequate landing areas, and tactile warning strips for wheelchair users and the visually impaired

Accessibility Recommendation F: Locate pedestrian signal buttons so that they are reachable by wheelchair users, no higher than 42" from the ground

Accessibility Recommendation G: As individual projects get underway, assess seating and provide additional benches to fill in gaps in availability

Accessibility Recommendation H: Ensure that benches have back support and armrests to help users rise from a seated position

Accessibility Recommendation I: Locate seating near areas with other amenities, at viewing areas, and at no greater than 1/4-mile intervals

Accessibility Recommendation J: As park plan projects enter the design phase, assess the possibility of additional hookups for drinking fountains

Seating along a pedestrian trail. MPRB

ESSENTIAL SERVICES RECOMMENDATION

Access to restrooms becomes more essential during certain life stages. Being uncertain about their availability along a trail is enough to prevent large segments of the population from being able to get out and enjoy the park. Having well-maintained restrooms available along trails makes a difference for pregnant women, families with little kids, and many older adults. The Cedar-Isles plan calls for additional restroom facilities at:

- The athletic fields on the southern side of Lake of the Isles
- The canoe racks and dock on the northwest side of Lake of the Isles
- Proposing a permanent restroom facility at Cedar Lake East Beach instead of the current temporary restrooms

While certainly an improvement, providing restrooms at these locations still falls short of the recommendations for similar MPRB facilities, such as the Central Riverfront and Above the Falls Regional Parks, which suggest permanent or portable restrooms at 10-minute walking intervals (about every 1/2-mile).

Essential Services Recommendation A: Essential visitor services, such restrooms, drinking fountains, or seating, should be considered for inclusion at other areas within the project area as individual projects are identified for detailed design.

Soft Surface Trail with Edge of Natural Materials

SAFETY

Safety of park and trail users is always a top priority. Recommendations related to safety along parkway roads, trails, and at intersections are covered in those respective sections; however, there are some additional safety-related considerations that support park access and recreation as a whole.

SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

Parkland within the project area much provide safe spaces and passage for those moving in and around the parks. While many areas feel completely safe during the day, at night, without proper lighting or resources can feel unsettling or unsafe. Ensuring adequate access points, wayfinding, lighting, and/or trail markings are visible ways to improve safety for users and encourages a more positive perception of these areas.

During the community engagement process, along with safety improvements that are similar for everyone, there were safety topics that were shared from personal lived experiences. For example, more women reported feeling unsafe in the current hiking conditions within the forest near Cedar Lake than men. At Cedar Lake East Beach, people of color were more likely to report that the police presence did not make them feel safe, while many white and local residents reported that the police presence helped them feel safe. The Safety Recommendations aim to balance safety for as many people as possible.

Safety Recommendation A: Provide lighting in accordance with The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) guidelines, including at the following locations:

- Areas with grouped amenities
- Along parkway roads
- Crosswalks
- Where paths intersect
- Where key signage is located

Safety Recommendation B: Consider providing emergency buttons at locations that where less lighting is intended or in areas less traveled

Safety Recommendation C: Increase sight-lines through the forest to enhance visibility along paved and soft surface trails through removal of understory invasive species like buckthorn

Safety Recommendation D: Revisit safety conditions at East Cedar Beach following once the Southwest Light Rail line is up and running. Evaluate current park police presence, and whether other safety improvements that could be considered, such as programming, lighting, signage, etc.

People spending time at East Cedar Lake Beach. MPRB

INTERPRETATION

Decades of settlement and urban development have significantly changed these lakes over time. Nevertheless, the power of the water and the seasonal cycles of diverse ecosystems remain. Today the lakes and surrounding parkland continue to attract wildlife and people.

While park visitors circumnavigate the lakes and immerse themselves in various natural settings, there are few opportunities to discover, learn, and explore the natural resources, cultural legacy, and layered history of these places.

This section provides a framework for interpretation and cultural landscape recommendations throughout the Cedar -Isles plan area, anticipating future improvements and phased implementation. The interpretive themes, messaging, and media respond to input from community members, tribal partners, and the project team.

Interpretation can be developed by many organizations and agencies, based on compatible missions and funding availability. The key is that anyone who develops and implements an interpretive planning, programming, and/or exhibit project within the project area does so within the interpretive framework provided in this section. This shared vision and strategy will help partners to preserve, manage, and interpret the site consistently and effectively.

The purpose of this section is to describe a compelling and comprehensive vision for engaging trail visitors in the history, nature, and culture of Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles through interpretation. This section will illustrate a connected set of experiences for the lakes, parks and trails that connect them.

Canoeing on Lake of the Isles 1913 (MN Historical Society)

Loppet Winter Festival, Lake of the Isles (Loppet.org photo by Dan Anderson)

UNDERSTANDING INTERPRETATION

Interpretation forges emotional and intellectual connections between visitors and a place, story, or resource. Interpretation is a communication process that explains the meaning of something and to deepen understanding. Interpretation answers the questions "What is this place about?" and "What does this place mean?" by defining an overarching theme and weaving stories and messages through the site that deepen and enrich that theme in various ways.

Stories and messages are intended to teach, to expand a visitor's capacity to imagine what this place was and could be, and to communicate complex — and at times challenging or painful stories — to increase empathy and understanding.

These two lakes hold many stories and many histories, including deep-history geological processes and ecosystem dynamics. Interpretation throughout the park will add depth to an already enjoyable experience by providing context, revealing complexities and highlighting unique characteristics of the site. Different types of media, interactive features, signs, and places to gather will help to connect people to this place - the animals, birds, plants, waters - and to each other.

Interpretation and messaging is designed to help connect people to the site through stories, sensory engagement and new perspectives. It is also an integral way of building community around stewardship and action, creating opportunities for awareness, intrigue, understanding and compassion.

INTERPRETIVE GOALS

The planning process for the Cedar-Isles Plan considered the place-specific historical, cultural, and natural resources to be interpreted and the demographics of the people who use the site currently and into the future to develop relevant interpretive messages. Interpretation builds on the project vision and guiding principles with

a set of goals that define what will be achieved and guide how the goals will be brought to life.

Interpretation Goal 1: Create a greater sense of welcome for a broader audience.

Interpretation Goal 2: Engage park and trail visitors with interactive installations that engage many senses and are relevant and memorable to diverse audiences.

Interpretation Goal 3: Honor the layered and honest history of this place as Dakota homeland.

Interpretation Goal 4: Celebrate the cultural landscape legacy.

Interpretation Goal 5: Provide opportunities for visitors to learn about natural resource restoration efforts in progress.

Interpretation Goal 6: Inspire stewardship and instill respect through engaging visitors with evidence and impacts of climate change within the project area.

Interpretation Goal 7: Strengthen connections between humans, the water bodies, the land and plants, and the animals and birds.

Interpretation Goal 8: Ensure interpretive experiences and elements are not intrusive to the natural environment.

Interpretation Goal 9: Provide a variety of interpretation features, varying from storytelling panels, overlooks for personal reflection, local public art, living history, media, and sensory native planting.

ORGANIZING THE EXPERIENCE

The plan is organized around two larger frameworks for interpretation — Site-Wide Messaging that spans the entire site and Focus-Area Messaging, that consider opportunities to engage with specific features and places in a more meaningful and powerful way. Within each framework, site-wise and focus-area, features will be sensitively integrated into site to minimize disturbance to

natural resources and wildlife. Features will be located at areas where amenities already exist or are being proposed to consolidate interventions and places of human activity across the site.

SITE-WIDE MESSAGING

The intention of Site-wide Messaging is to communicate that the lakes, trails and parkland contribute to larger ecological systems and community networks. Site-wide messaging will include interpretation integrated into welcome entry points, water access points, along trails and within key plant community areas, enlightened behavior can emerge from a deeper understanding of the value and deep power of this place.

FOCUS-AREA MESSAGING

Messaging at focus areas throughout the site is an opportunity to encourage pause and reflection through focused features deeply tied to a particular place. These features will prompt people to slow down and seek out specific points of interest in the surrounding landscape and to awaken their sense of curiosity and imagination. This landscape, as part of the Grand Rounds, provides recreational opportunities and cultural resources that connect people with the past. Focus-Area Messaging will include interpretation integrated into culturally significant places (such as bridges, key viewpoints, along the channel), around gathering spaces (at beaches, lawn areas, the warming house, and picnic areas), and at places of pause (benches, overlooks, and art installations).

Natural signage, examples of site specific materials and aesthetic for site-wide messaging
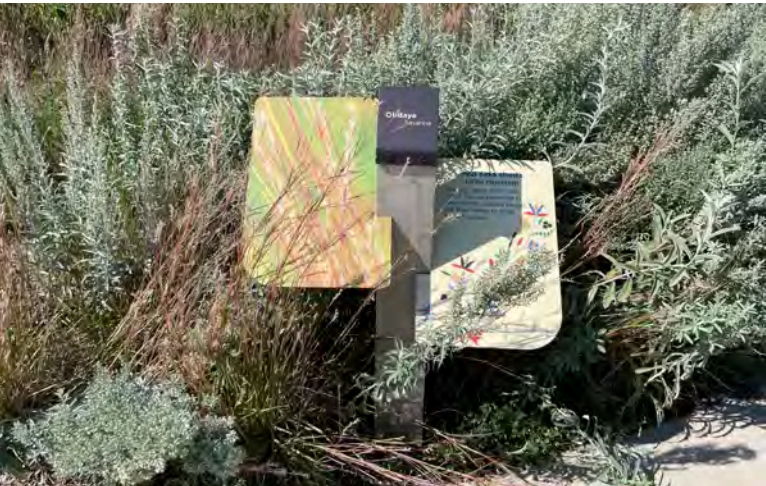
Plant nations interpretation at Historic Fort Snelling at Bdote. TEN x TEN

INTERPRETIVE GUIDANCE

This section will recommend interpretive themes, subthemes, stories, and messages and describe what they provide in terms of possible experiences for visitors.

OVERARCHING THEME

A theme is a unifying message of all interpretation of a site. "The Lakes Remember," serves as an overarching interpretive theme for the MPRB plan for Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles. It emerged from stories and conversations that describe a human relationship to the land and a natural history that transcends time.

As the earth holds deep memories of what's happened through time, **the lakes remember** and offer many stories of our past worth hearing.

SUBTHEMES, STORIES, AND MESSAGES

Subthemes support and develop the theme. They help to organize the stories told and experiences that park users will have once the features are implemented. Stories bring to life memories, voices, smells, seasons, and express the dramatic transformations wrought on this landscape over time. The Lakes Remember is supported by four subthemes:

1. A Land of Lakes
2. Kinship and Connections
3. Resilience
4. Urbanization and Equity

Interpretive overlook railing at Historic Fort Snelling at Bdote. TEN x TEN

Viewing portals, an example of interactive interpretation

A LAND OF LAKES

Celebrate and protect the lakes by enhancing experience with their watery horizons and dynamic liminal edges.

On a map, the threshold between wet and dry is often collapsed into a thin line, obscuring the reality of a wider and more complex territory that often fluctuates between wet and dry. Over half of the Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles park space is comprised of water.

In the summer the parks are a multi-modal network of bike, boat and foot traffic where people flock to the beaches, water, share and sun. In the winter, the parks transform into a completely new space where the surface of the lakes become performative surfaces for skiing, skating, and exploring.

STORY THREADS

- The shallow lake (LOI) and surrounding marsh
- Water is life, Mni (water in Dakota), Utechi and the Water spirit
- Water quality partnership, challenges, algae, bacteria
- History of Flooding
- Aquatic plants and invasive species
- Fish and Wildlife
- Littoral zone, shoreline buffer, biodiversity
-

KINSHIP AND CONNECTIONS

Cultivate relationships between humans and nature to increase wellbeing and strengthen socio-ecological resilience.

Mitákuye Ows'in or "All of my relatives" is a teaching at the core of Dakota wicohan (ways of life). Dakota people have been taught that "all" includes "everything seen and unseen", including animals, plants, humans, rocks, earth, waters, and spirits. For many, it requires a significant shift in thinking to see all of creation as our relative and not as an object or property. Building kinship between humans, animals, and landscapes

Appropriate stories shall be developed in collaboration with tribal advisors.

STORY THREADS

- Wita Topa, Settlement and Displacement, the 1805 Treaty
- Mitakuye Owasin, "we are all related", kinship (respect, interconnectedness, responsibility)
- Humans are related and interdependent with all forms of life (animals, plants, rocks, stars. etc)
- Natural democracy (sustainable practices)
- Dakota world view (social + ecological resilience)
- Indigenous materials
- Cultural identity tied to place, collective memory
- Contemporary stories of how Dakota communities maintain a connection to these landscapes today
- Human connections to landscape through foraging (wild rice), harvesting, fishing, and stewardship
- Minorities and people of color have been restricted from these landscapes over time
-

RESILIENCE

Engage people in the transformation of the site's ecology over time to build a deeper understanding of resilience in the face of climate change.

The back-and-forth tension between natural systems and human intervention is easily observed in today's landscape. Two centuries ago, the lakes featured different landscapes dominated by open water, marshes, wetlands, and prairies. With climate change, these landscapes continue to evolve, and the future of some endemic species is uncertain. These lakes provide much needed wetlands, open water, and wooded areas for biodiversity and wildlife.

STORY THREADS

• Birds, migration, threatened species due to climate change

• Geologic time, the river warren, glaciers, floods, springs, and the Mississippi River

• Historic vegetation

• Culturally significant plants (protection, healing, sustenance)

• Native habitats (wetlands, marshes, lakes)

• Altered hydrology

• Remnant and protected ecological communities

• Foraging and harvesting plants and food within the park, with improved communication and permitting for indigenous people

•

URBANIZATION AND EQUITY

Invite exporation of how a layered history and the dynamics of urbanization effects the everyday life of this place.

Urbanization is an inevitable process. Over time the context surrounding these lakes have changed, as have the ecological forces acting upon them, shaping what this park has become today and helping foreshadow what is to come. Urbanization can only be a force for positive transformation if it respects and promotes human rights. Interpreting these layers of change over time will invite audiences to consider how to balance sustainable growth, preservation, and equity in the built environment through a variety of lenses.

STORY THREADS

• Railroad construction from 1885-1882

• Cedar Lake's earthen causeway,

• Lake of the Isles' four original islands

• Design and planning legacy (City Beautiful Movement, H.W.S. Cleveland Park System Plan 1883)

• Lake of the Isles Dredging in the 1800's and early 1900's

• Navigable waterways, the canals and lagoons as "public necessity"

• Restrictive Covenants along the Kenilworth Channel and near Cedar Lake

• Demographics over time and property values around the lakes

• Human effects on the lakes, channels, and canals

• WPA improvements to the area, incorporating documentation of features that have been removed

MEDIA AND METHODS

Interpretation aims to offer different audiences a variety of mediums for engaging with interpretive information. Interpretation is divided into guided and self-guided methods that range from hands-on immersive experiences that offer visitors opportunities to walk, push, lift, or touch interpretive elements to reinforce the content shared, to fixed elements, experiences, programs, and events.

GUIDED INTERPRETATION

PROGRAMS

Interpretive programming includes regularly scheduled activities such as field trips, classes, guided tours, or lectures. They could take place at interpretive nodes such as the Cedar Lake East Beach formalized event area, other Cedar Lake beaches, Lake of the Isles lawns, or entry gateways. Guided programming can be led by MPRB staff, trained interpreters, or other partners.

Guided interpretive experiences aim to engage and inspire visitors, rather than educate, and can be presented in a variety of formats.

EVENTS

Special events and activities that are scheduled on an annual or one-time basis. Significant programming within the project area is led by the Cedar-Isles-Dean Neighborhood Association (CIDNA) and includes a series of music, performance, festivals, and other community events year-round.

SELF-GUIDED INTERPRETATION

Self-guided interpretation opportunities include interactive experiences, at viewing spots, trail crossings, entry gateways and places of pause. Each interpretive node can include tactile and multi-sensory elements, interpretive art, first-hand storytelling, as well as historical and ecological information.

• Interpretive Panels

• Interactive Signs

• Story Walks

• Audio Posts

• Tactile Elements

• Integrated Landscape Elements

• Mobile Apps

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles have a robust history, beginning with the indigenous communities who lived and utilized these lakes and natural areas, through the development of the railroads, the City Beautiful movement up to present day. It will be important to retain elements of the landscape and history from the many layers of eras through present day.

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES RECOMMENDATIONS

Historical and Cultural Recommendation A: Work with tribal advisory to connect people with the full story and broad history of the lakes, including indigenous history. Develop appropriate strategies to amplify indigenous stories, cultural practices, and connection to the land

Historical and Cultural Recommendation B: Protect current and desired use of the landscape by indigenous people through

- Working with indigenous community members to advise on land management and plant species
- Improved communication about approved harvesting

Historical and Cultural Recommendation C: Add culturally important plants through guidance by tribal representatives

Historical and Cultural Recommendation D: Provide a connection to the exiled communities today by:

- Increasing partnerships and programming with tribes and indigenous community members
- Providing spaces for ceremonies, interpretation, and indigenous land management
- Creating events and experiences that invite indigenous community members to the area

Historical and Cultural Recommendation E: Expand opportunities for Minnesota Dakota community members to connect with the lakes

Historical and Cultural Recommendation F: Use Dakota language on site signs to improve understanding that this is Dakota homeland and help indigenous people feel more welcome

Historical and Cultural Recommendation G: Preserve archaeological sites by discouraging visitor use in those areas. Some archaeological sites are currently in active use, so limit development and avoid ground disturbance in those areas

Historical and Cultural Recommendation H: Consider incorporating native plants to improve ecological health while maintaining the historic outline that was created in the early 20th century

Historical and Cultural Recommendation I: Incorporate documentation of features that have been removed; for example, the WPA improvements to the area

Public Art at Bde Maka Ska. MPRB

WPA Walls in Kenilworth Lagoon. MPRB

Bridge and Channel to Lake of the Isles. MPRB

Historical and Cultural Recommendation J: Preserve archaeological resources, including any below the water's surface

Historical and Cultural Recommendation K: Repair the ecological condition and littoral edge of the lakes by improving habitat for animals and adding native plants to connect to the indigenous use and practices in locations where this can occur without impacting character-defining features

Historical and Cultural Recommendation L: Protect significant cultural resources and historic features that characterize the design and development of the parks

Historical and Cultural Recommendation M: Preserve Lake of the Isles Parkway and Cedar Lake Parkway and ensure alterations retain the original intent of circumnavigating the lake with views across the lake at key points and opportunities along the route to connect with nature

Historical and Cultural Recommendation N: Preserve the Kenilworth Channel and Lagoon and the Lake of the Isles Lagoon & Canal

Historical and Cultural Recommendation O: Retain the historic design intent of being able to travel between the lakes, either by water or other means

Historical and Cultural Recommendation P: Preserve portions of the lawn around Lake of the Isles that are at key intersections and provide views across the lake

Historical and Cultural Recommendation Q: Consider reducing the amount of mown lawn to address ecological concerns and to reflect the indigenous legacy and use of the area

Historical and Cultural Recommendation R: Maintain the historically created topography and contoured edge of Lake of the Isles

PROGRAM AND AMENITIES

Program and amenities, the features and/or facilities that are offered within the parks, are a key element that allows users to enjoy different experiences within the park system. It allows visitors to arrive, enjoy, and stay in a place.

The Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles area offers program and amenities for both activities on land and water. In Minnesota, program and amenities within parks change significantly seasonally, with winter activities overlapping with both land and water spaces throughout the parks, including skating rinks and ski trails.

Planning for year-round comfort, accessibility, and engagement is key to sustaining the energy and care felt for Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles for existing and future visitors.

PROGRAM AND AMENITIES GOALS

Program and Amenities Goal 1: Take cues from how people use the parks and lakes today to maintain, improve, in some cases, build upon existing amenities within the project area

Program and Amenities Goal 2: Retain existing year-round and seasonal activities and enhance safety at entry points and areas with grouped activities

Program and Amenities Goal 3: Honor the unique qualities of each lake and connect visitors to these distinct experiences

Program and Amenities Goal 4: Respect and celebrate the history of the landscape through programming and interpretation

Program and Amenities Goal 5: Balance protection of and access to previously disconnected areas of parkland with careful circulation, amenity, and wayfinding planning

PROGRAM AND AMENITIES RECOMMENDATIONS

Program and Amenities Recommendation A: Group and sensitively site amenities to reduce impact to viewsheds and open park areas

Program and Amenities Recommendation B: Formalize plan-identified water access points using strategies that blend with the natural environment and support non-motorized boat access, fishing, general viewing, monitoring and maintenance activities, informal experiences

Program and Amenities Recommendation C: Remove informal water access points not identified in the park plan and restore with land or water-based plant communities

Program and Amenities Recommendation D: Provide amenities that are flexible, light touch, and provide a mixture of informal and formal experiences

Formalized Water Access

Program and Amenities Recommendation E: Provide temporary and permanent restrooms that make spending time at the lakes comfortable year-round

Program and Amenities Recommendation F: Provide and design spaces and amenities to support existing and future programming opportunities

Program and Amenities Recommendation G: Ensure all proposed and enhanced amenities fit within the character of their location, use appropriate natural materials, and include reference to appropriate history

Program and Amenities Recommendation H: Cultivate long-term relationships with community members and organizations to inform implementation of the park plan document

PROGRAMMING RECOMMENDATIONS

Programming refers to the planned activities, events, and experiences at the parks and oftentimes takes advantage of the amenities that are provided in the park. Programming can help invite community members to a location that they would otherwise not visit and can adapt and evolve based on the needs of the public and MPRB over time.

Programming Recommendation A: Encourage and support existing and new MPRB-led and partner-led programming opportunities to promote social, multi-generational and cross-cultural interaction

Programming Recommendation B: Strengthen human relationships with nature by continuing to provide and support nature-based programming, education, and/or experiences

Programming Recommendation C: Continue to provide educational programming opportunities for youth within the DNR Friends School boundary

Programming Recommendation D: Collaborate with indigenous community members and tribes to create multigenerational experiences that honors their legacy

Year Round Permanent Restroom

5.4 PROJECT-WIDE DESIGN

OVERVIEW

This section describes the project-wide design across different topics, which will be implemented over the next 20 to 30 years. Water quality and natural areas are the first topics covered and include recommendations focused on stormwater runoff management, lake access, and natural resources. This is followed by recommendations for access, circulation, seasonal amenities, and programming.

Sections 5.5 and 5.6, which includes areas identified with more detail, should be reviewed for additional detail on proposed design recommendations. Section 5.5 covers zones and focus areas for Cedar Lake and section 5.6 covers Lake of the Isles, Kenilworth Channel, and Dean Parkway.

WATER QUALITY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Many different improvements are proposed to address water quality within the project area. Design elements include treating stormwater runoff within the park, maintaining and stabilizing shoreline areas without formal water access, and maximizing and restoring habitat (land- and water-based). These improvements are described for the project area in three maps: stormwater runoff management, lake access, and natural resources recommendations. Together, these recommendations work together to address water quality. They also provide additional ways for people and wildlife to enjoy the park areas by creating, enhancing, or expanding habitat and nature-based recreational opportunities.

MANAGING STORMWATER AND IMPROVING WATER QUALITY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Expanding, Enhancing, and Restoring Plant Communities: Diversifying plant communities expands habitat opportunities within parkland. Many plant communities contribute to filtering stormwater runoff from neighboring amenities, trails, and roads. As

these different plant communities are expanded, enhanced, and/or restored over time, so will their ability to filter stormwater runoff and support wildlife. Enhancement and restoration involve activities such as: removal of invasive species, establishment or re-establishment of existing or historic plant communities, timing seeding with nearby plant communities, and using a phased approach in implementation. Additional details related to existing and future management of these plant communities is in the MPRB Natural Areas Plan Phase 2 or will be part of a future Natural Areas Management Plan. Target species within the proposed habitat improvements include Common Moorhen, Least Bittern, Virginia Rail, Blanding's Turtle, Western Harvest Mouse, Eastern Hognose Snake, Lark Sparrow, Acadian Flycatcher, Regal Fritillary, Smooth Green Snake, Grasshopper Sparrow, Rusty Patched Bumble Bee, and Cope's Grey Tree Frog. For more details about what and where plant communities are planned, review the Natural Resources Design Recommendations.

Floodplain Forest: Floodplain forests are low-lying forest plant communities that are often near bodies of water and are subject to flooding following heavy rainfall. They provide habitat and water quality benefits through flood storage and recharging groundwater. Floodplain forest will be restored in the southwest part of Cedar Lake near Cedar Meadows Wetland and the south parking lot. See Natural Resources Design Recommendations for details.[1]

Formal Lake Access: Formal lake access includes shoreline areas that have been formally designated and designed for park visitors to access the water. Reducing the quantity of lake access points that were informally created over time will minimize erosion, reduce nutrient loading, and reduce negative impacts on habitat and wildlife. See the Lake Access Recommendations for more details.

Lawn: Lawns are open, grassy areas that generally don't provide benefits to habitat; however, they can improve water quality when

1 Michigan Natural Resources Inventory, MSU extension: https://mnfi.anr.msu.edu/communities/description/10658/floodplain-forest

Floodplain Forest

Littoral Edge Expansion

Lawn. MPRB

Formal Water Access

compacted soils are restored and they are able to take in and filter stormwater. Lawns also provide views, access, and gathering areas for people who would like to use the park for formal and informal activities. Lawn will be retained in historic and well-used areas, mostly located at Dean Parkway and Lake of the Isles, as well as some areas around Cedar Lake. See Natural Resources Design Recommendations for more details.

Littoral Edge: A littoral edge is an improved vegetative edge beginning from the ordinary high-water mark and extending into permanently submerged shoreline. This collection of plants can provide habitat for wildlife and also help to reduce impacts from rain events, protect the shoreline, and filter stormwater runoff before it enters the lakes. The littoral edge will be expanded, enhanced, and restored at both lakes and is shown and described under the Stormwater Runoff Management Recommendations.

Marsh: A marsh is a type of treeless, grassland that sits under water for long periods of time, often accompanied by rich soil deposits and biodiversity. They provide important food and habitat spaces for land and water species. They also provide water quality benefit by reducing phosphorus loading and improving soil health. Additionally, marshes can reduce the risk of flooding. Marsh will be expanded, enhanced, and restored where there are existing marsh areas in northeast Cedar Lake, with small pockets of restoration at Lake of the Isles on the southern end and northwest side between Penn and Newton Avenues. See the Stormwater Runoff Management Design Recommendations for details.[1]

Mesic Oak Forest: Mesic oak forests are a mixture of leafy overstory trees and understory plants and shrubs. These areas support wildlife habitat for a variety of species, provide ample shade, and include many plants and trees to view and enjoy. Existing mesic oak forest areas on the west and a little on the east side of the lake will

1 National Geographic Resource Library: https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/marsh

be enhanced and expanded. Additionally, most of the altered forest/ woodland areas on the west and east sides of the lake will build on what's there and be restored to mesic oak forest. At Lake of the Isles, there will be enhancements for the northern island and area along the multi-use fields with restoration from altered forest/woodland on the southern island are land along Lake Street. For specific locations, see the Natural Resources Design Recommendations.

Oak Savanna: Oak savannas include large overstory trees, understory plants, and shorter grasses. Oak savanna restoration from primarily altered forest/woodland will cover Cedar Lake in the north and northeast portion of the park. To see the full extents, review the Natural Resources Design Recommendations.

Prairie: Prairies are a mixture of flowering plants and taller grasses that are densely grouped together. Today, the existing prairie along the Cedar Lake Regional Trail is home to a number of different species, which will expand with future enhancements. The prairie will be enhanced along the Cedar Lake Regional Trail and restored in a small segment on the east side of Cedar Lake near South Upton Avenue. For more details, see the Natural Resources Design Recommendations.

Prairie/Pollinator Plantings: Prairie/pollinator plantings often include dense groups of flowering plants that are beneficial to pollinators such as bees and butterflies. Once established, these plantings along with the existing prairie and rain gardens will create a chain of pollinator habitat connections. Prairie/Pollinator plantings are proposed in a few spots on the southwest side of Cedar Lake, linear stretches throughout Lake of the Isles, and large swaths along Dean Parkway. Pollinator plantings can include plants that thrive in anywhere from full sun to full shade depending on the plant type. See the Natural Resources Design Recommendations for details.

Rain Gardens: Rain gardens are a type of bioretention pond where soils and vegetation have been selected and established to support

Marsh Restoration

Mesic Oak Forest Restoration

Prairie. MPRB

Oak Savanna

groundwater recharge, pollutant removal and runoff detention. In addition to treating stormwater and improving water quality, they can also provide habitat benefits. Collectively, the proposed rain gardens and prairie/pollinator plantings will provide habitat patches that pollinators can utilize to expand their range(s). Rain gardens are located at Cedar Lake, Lake of the Isles, and Dean Parkway. See the Stormwater Runoff Management Recommendations for details.

Shoreline Buffer: Shoreline buffers are enhanced vegetative areas varying in character located along the lakeshore. These areas can provide habitat for wildlife, help stabilize shorelines, minimize impacts from heavy rain events, and filter stormwater runoff before it enters the lakes. Some of the areas where the shoreline buffer has been expanded are to address areas of erosion from informal water access points. Shoreline buffers are featured at both lakes and along the Kenilworth Channel, which is shown and described under the Stormwater Runoff Management Recommendations.

Retrofits to Constructed Wetland: Cedar Meadows Wetland is a constructed wetland designed to help filter a large amount of stormwater before entering into Cedar Lake. Other benefits include flood storage, habitat for wildlife, and opportunities for enjoyment and education for people through signage and docks. Retrofitting this constructed wetland is one of the most effective and cost-effective ways to address runoff into Cedar Lake and will benefit from upgrades, or retrofits, to improve how well it functions. The details around what retrofits may be needed will be determined during detailed design and implementation. Cedar Meadows Wetland is located on the southwest side of Cedar Lake.

Pollinator Planting

Raingarden

Shoreline Buffer

Cedar Meadows Wetland

Tree Trenches: Tree trenches are an engineered landscape practice that uses a linear system of trees connected by an underground infiltration structure to manage stormwater. The underground portion of the system is designed to filter runoff, water trees, and slowly release water back into the ground, which helps to improve water quality and support the urban tree canopy. Tree trenches are often located near roads with one located along Cedar Lake Parkway with the majority planned along Lake of the Isles and Dean Parkways. See the Stormwater Runoff Management Recommendations for more details.

Underground Parkway Stormwater Treatment: Underground parkway treatments are designed to collect stormwater from impervious surfaces and bring it to underground storage units. Once there, water is filtered and slowly released into the lake or ground. Underground parkway treatments don't provide habitat directly, however utilizing this treatment options means parkland can be open to other uses. Underground parkway treatments are proposed along Cedar Lake Parkway in the northwest and south. At Lake of the Isles, smaller segments are proposed along the parkway in the southern half of the park and the northern arm. See the Stormwater Runoff Management Recommendations for exact locations.

Tree Trenches
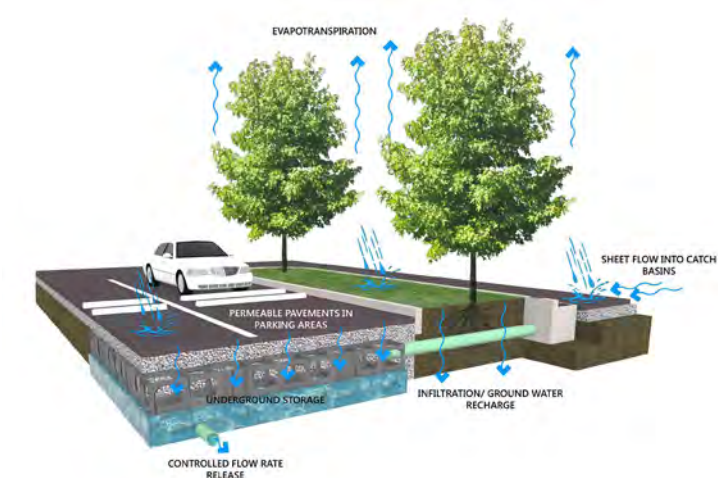
Underground Parkway Treatment

Figure 5.3: Section of Selected Proposed Improvements at western Lake of the Isles

STORMWATER RUNOFF MANAGEMENT DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

Today, the lakes are important spaces for a variety of recreational activities as well as home to wildlife. In order to continue to provide opportunities for activities and habitat into the future, several improvements are proposed to address stormwater runoff before it enters the lakes. Improvements are informed by the CAC water quality subcommittee goals and are located in areas that have the greatest opportunity to address volume and/or pollutant loads based on available space and existing topography.

At Cedar Lake, improvements will treat two outfalls generating stormwater from the watershed in addition to treating stormwater generated within the park. An expanded littoral edge is present throughout most of the lake except in areas where there are beaches and other forms of lake access or marsh restoration. The improved shoreline buffer is along many of the same areas as the littoral edge and is also located where marsh restoration areas are located, such as the northeast side of the lake. There are a few rain gardens, mostly on the western side with one near East Cedar Lake Beach, which will address runoff from the outfall at that location. Along the parkway road, there are segments identified for underground parkway treatment in the northwest and south parts of the park as well as a tree trench area near the Cedar Meadows Wetland. Retrofits to Cedar Meadows Wetland are also proposed to improve how effectively stormwater is treated through this constructed system. Details on what the retrofits should be will take place during detailed design and implementation.

In a different variation, Lake of the Isles includes many of the same improvement types as Cedar Lake. Improvements will treat stormwater generated within the park as well as seven outfalls addressing stormwater directly from the watershed. The littoral edge is expanded around the lake and both islands, notably wider

than Cedar Lake because Lake of the Isles is a shallower lake. An improved shoreline buffer, varying in width, is proposed where shoreline plants exist today. Between these proposed improvements, one or both of them are present around most of the lake except for the existing and proposed water access spots (see map of lake access recommendations for locations). Marsh restoration for existing marsh areas is proposed near the multi-use fields, the lagoon, and in a few spots between Penn and Newton Avenues South. Rain gardens are incorporated at several locations around the lake, most pairing with swaths of prairie/pollinator plantings to enhance habitat opportunities. In areas with more limited land available, segments of underground parkway treatment and tree trenches are proposed. Most of the underground treatment is in the southern half of the park with tree trenches mostly along the western and southern portions of the park.

Dean Parkway will feature tree trenches, ranging in length, along most segments of the parkway and rain gardens along the parking bays closest to Lake Street. The channel between Kenilworth Place and Dean Parkway includes an improved shoreline buffer that still provides lake access from both sides.

LEGEND

EXISTING

◆ Outfalls Treated in the Plan

✛ Outfall Locations

PROPOSED

Expanded Littoral Edge

Improved Shoreline Buffer

Land Acquisition

Marsh Restoration

Rain Garden

Retrofits of Existing Constructed Wetland

Tree Trenches

Underground Parkway Stormwater Treatment

Figure 5.4: Stormwater Runoff Management Diagram
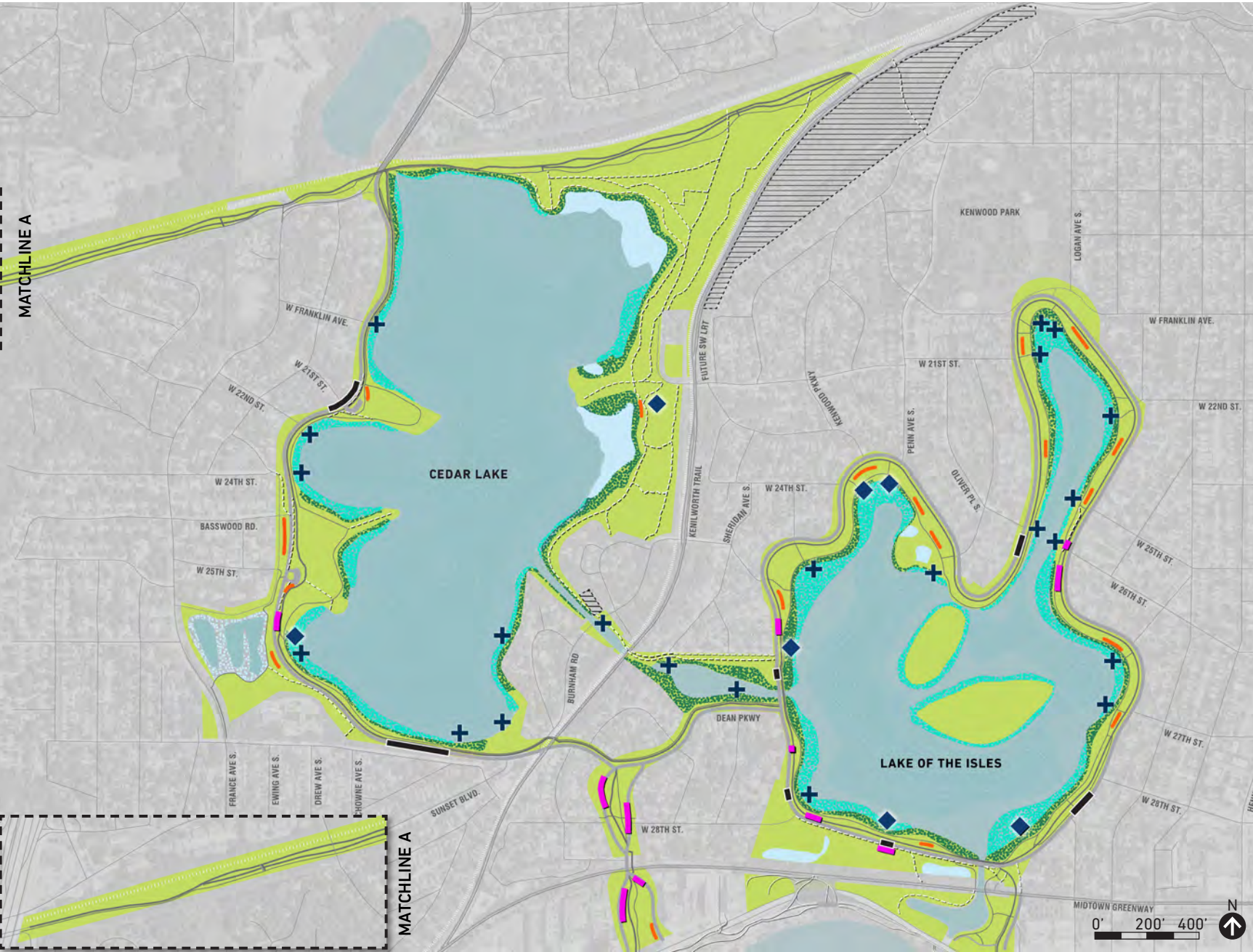
LAKE ACCESS DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

The lakes are popular for many reasons, including the ability to access the water for a variety of activities like fishing, swimming, boating, stand up paddleboarding or just general curiosity and enjoyment. Many of the existing ways people access and enjoy the lake will remain, including the beaches on Cedar, docks at both lakes, boat launch on Cedar that's used for maintenance and management activities, and stone steps around Lake of the Isles. Another way people access the lakes today are through informal water access points which impact water quality by causing erosion, nutrient loading, and potential negative impacts to habitat and wildlife. To address goals for improved water quality and the desire for continued lake access, some of the informal access points will be formalized. The formalized water access points will be designed to curb erosion and accommodate a variety of previously noted existing uses. Eventually, any remaining informal water access points –not formalized in the plan will return to shoreline buffer, littoral edge, or natural area depending on what's been identified under stormwater runoff management and natural resources recommendations.

At Cedar Lake, many of the informal water access points along the western and some on the northern side of Cedar will be formalized and a new dock will be added to South Cedar Lake Beach. At Lake of the Isles, formalized water access points are spaced along the lake with a few more along the eastern side of the lake to accommodate the higher density visitor traffic. There's also a new dock proposed near W 27th St. which will provide a new type of access for the east side of the lake. At the Kenilworth Channel, the existing water access will also remain as a formal water access point.

LEGEND

EXISTING
- Beach Water Access
- Boat Launch
- Dock
- Water Access: Stone Steps

PROPOSED
- Dock
- Formalized Water Access
- Land Acquisition

Proposed Formalized Water Access

Proposed Dock

Figure 5.5: Lake Access Diagram
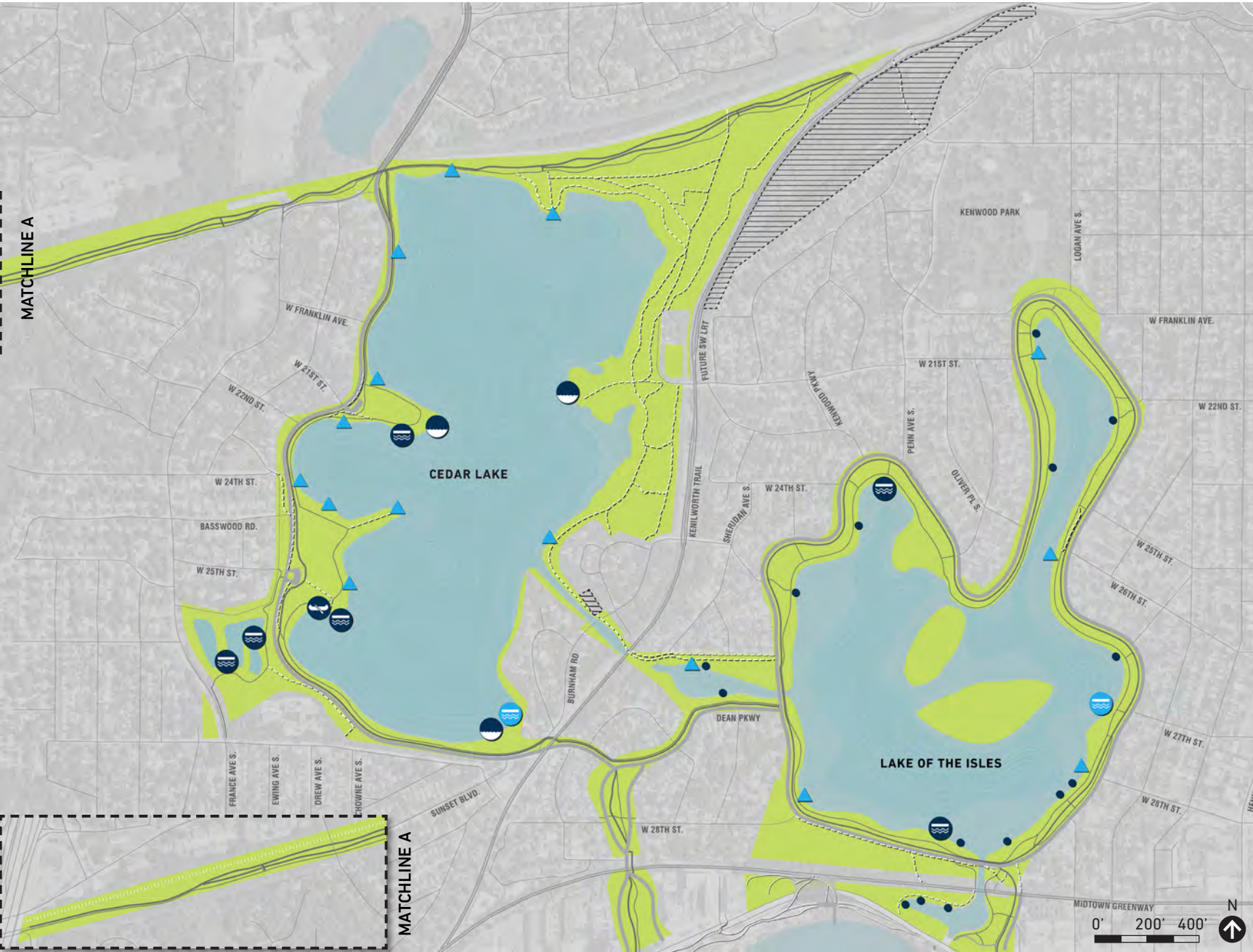
NATURAL RESOURCES DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

Like the lakes, the landscape and natural resources found throughout the project area are enjoyed and beloved by many park visitors. Recommendations for the project area are informed by principles of biodiversity, existing soils, DNR native plant community guides, and community interest in building on and maintaining what exists today.

At Cedar Lake, the plan used as assessment of existing plant communities, uses, and soil types in identifying the most compatible soil types and plant communities to restore the existing woodland areas. This includes floodplain forest, mesic oak forest, and oak savanna. Mesic oak forest makes up most of the parkland area with the oak savanna concentrated in the northeast portion of the park and smaller areas of floodplain forest in the southwest. These areas will continue to provide shade, habitat, and opportunities for activities like birding, and hiking. With the many active volunteers at Cedar Lake, it will be important to continue to partner on restoration and management projects into the future. Cedar also includes some pockets of lawn, allowing visitors to picnic at tables or on the ground, free play, or other uses. The plan also identifies areas where the existing prairie could be enhanced along South Upton Avenue and a large swath of the Cedar Lake Regional Trail. A parcel of land adjacent to the forest on the northeast side of Cedar Lake, known as the "remnant lands" to many, is identified for acquisition. The future MPRB parkland area is largely proposed as a natural area, which will be defined in greater detail in implementation. This area will also have a trail running through it, connecting the Kenwood neighborhood on the hill to the Cedar Lake and Kenilworth Regional Trails.

While Cedar Lake and the Cedar Lake Regional Trail include more natural area options and minimal lawn, Lake of the Isles will continue to retain many of its lawn areas. Lake of the Isles contains

historically significant lawn areas, which have been preserved, along with strategically kept lawn spaces for informal activities to be enjoyed. Lawn areas that have shifted to other uses, include rain gardens and prairie/pollinator plantings, which will address water quality, flooding, and pollinator connectivity. The southern portion of Lake of the Isles includes some marsh restoration areas near the athletic fields and the lagoon. This area also has mesic oak forest bordering the multi-use fields and dog park. Both islands have also been proposed mesic oak forest.

LEGEND

EXISTING

- Existing Land Cover, No Change (may include turf, mixed canopy, mulch)
- Sand Beach

PROPOSED

- Enhanced Prairie
- Expanded Littoral Edge
- Floodplain Forest Restoration
- Formalized Water Access
- Improved Shoreline Buffer
- Land Acquisition
- Marsh Restoration
- Mesic Oak Forest Restoration
- Natural Area
- Oak Savanna Restoration
- Prairie/Pollinator Planting
- Rain Garden
- Retrofits to Existing Constructed Wetland

Figure 5.6: Natural Resource Diagram

Dean Parkway will remain mostly lawn, with large prairie/pollinator plantings added to the section north of the Midtown Greenway and smaller segments in the southern section where open lawn will remain in the center for continued formal and informal activities. The park area along Kenilworth Place and the Kenilworth Channel will continue to be mostly lawn with an expanded shoreline buffer.

Forest restoration will be completed in a phased approach, removing invasives and replanting with higher quality plant communities over time, with minimal impact to canopy cover, and ultimately increasing the diversity and number of healthy, old growth trees. The existing tree canopy should be maintained in preserved lawn areas.

TREE PRESERVATION AND IMPACT

Trees contribute to soil health, provide natural erosion control, habitat, and sequester carbon. They also create much needed shade and cooling in the parks. With these benefits, the tree population is one of the most valuable natural assets in the parks. The MPRB Comprehensive Plan and Ecological System Plan documents outline goals and strategies to preserve a vibrant tree canopy along with strengthening ecological connections and increasing green space connectivity. During the Cedar-Isles park planning process, MPRB heard strong support for protection of old growth trees and increasing and enhancing forested natural areas within the project area.

The plan proposes enhancing natural areas and improving the tree canopy in large swaths of existing forested areas, including the forests around Cedar Lake, the islands at Lake of the Isles, and forest area south of Lake of the Isles. It also proposes improving the tree canopy in the future MPRB-owned "remnant lands" parcel. Improving tree canopy means that MPRB would actively improve these areas with higher quality.

There are a number of areas that the plan proposes maintaining as

is, which means that MPRB should continue to plant, preserve, and maintain trees within these locations per normal protocols. These areas include parkland along the Cedar Lake Regional Trail, Dean Parkway, the Kenilworth Channel and lawn areas around Cedar and Isles.

Figure 5.7 identifies areas where the proposed design may possibly impact existing trees. These areas correspond with new or improved access and circulation that was deemed important to the public and to improve accessibility within the parks. When designing the plan, MPRB took great care to consider mitigation strategies and alternative options to minimize possibility of tree loss, including suggesting a certain type of trail, consideration of boardwalks or other infrastructure to be able to navigate around tree roots, and in some cases, a deviation from trail standards. The identified areas of possible tree impact all run through unmanaged forest areas with many of these connections formalizing existing trails, which means that the majority of the trail width is already cleared. The tree species that may be impacted will most likely be invasive or lower quality. All care should be taken in preserving old growth and higher quality trees in the implementation of the plan. Since this is a 20-30 year plan, it is also difficult to understand which, if any, trees will still exist at the time of implementation and would be impacted.
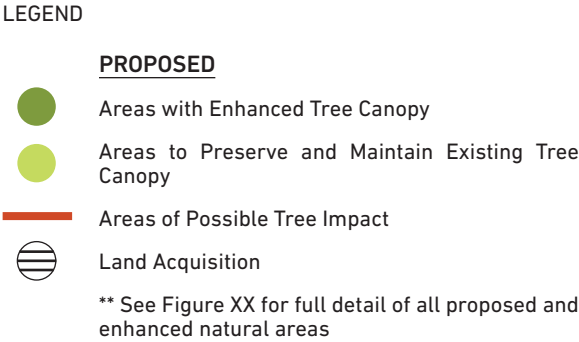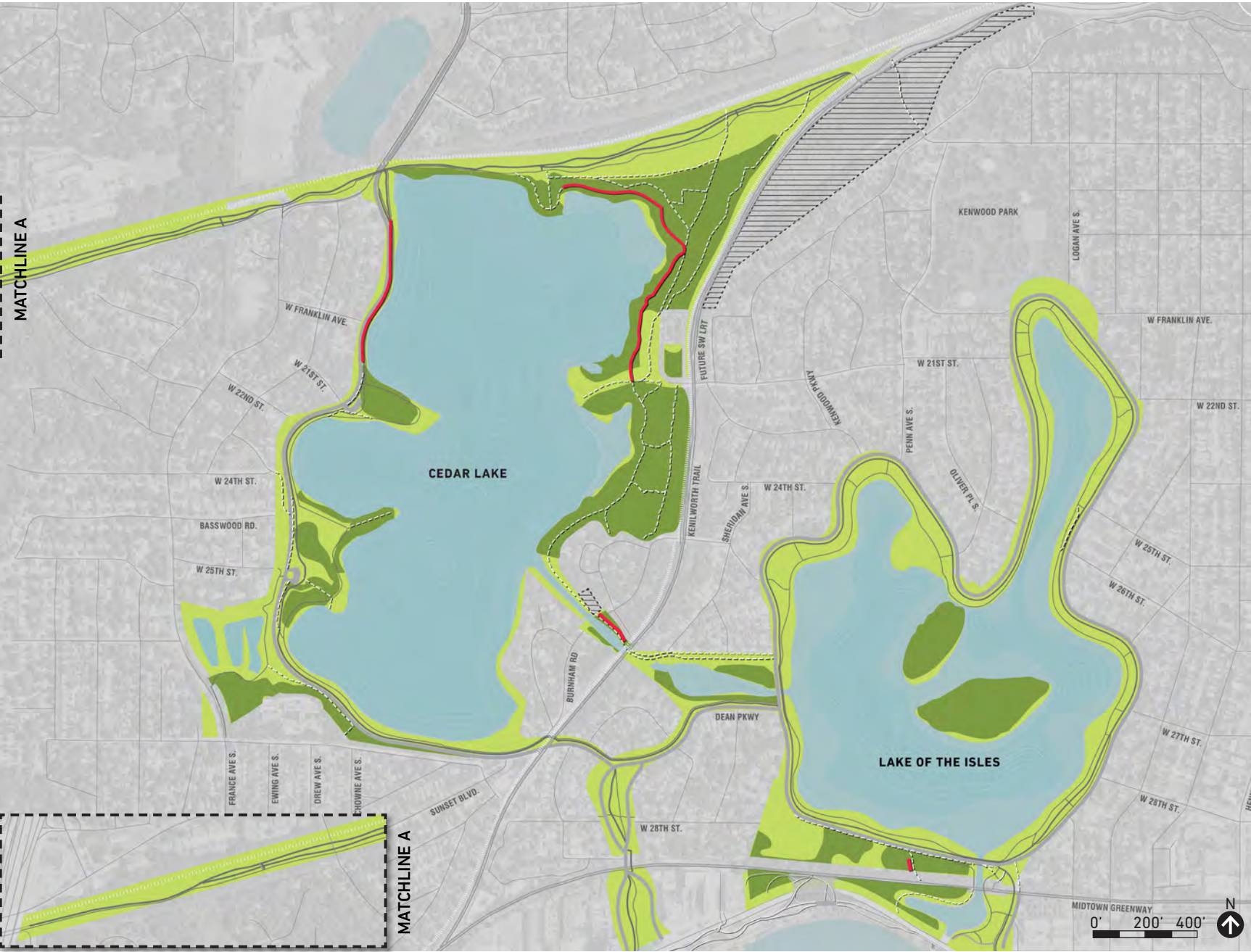
LEGEND

PROPOSED

● Areas with Enhanced Tree Canopy

● Areas to Preserve and Maintain Existing Tree Canopy

— Areas of Possible Tree Impact

⊜ Land Acquisition

** See Figure XX for full detail of all proposed and enhanced natural areas

Figure 5.7: Tree Canopy Diagram

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

The paved trails, ad hoc forest trails, and parkways are beloved and well used by many park visitors. Access and circulation recommendations for the project area are designed to ensure people have ways to move through the park, support an anticipated increase in use, and expand access to existing and proposed amenities.

Unlike the majority of other lakes in the park system, Cedar Lake doesn't have a paved trail that travels around the entire lake. The entire shoreline around Cedar Lake is owned by MPRB in varying widths, as narrow as seven feet and as wide as fifty, with the southeast shoreline adjacent to residential yards. During engagement, MPRB heard feedback that some folks wanted to be able to travel around the entirety of Cedar Lake, similar to how other trails are designed. Though ideas to create a connection were proposed and discussed in depth during the engagement process, no trail connection is proposed due to challenges to make a full connection on land with existing width in some areas along with a strong disinterest in a boardwalk. Instead, the design proposes an expanded littoral edge and improved shoreline buffer. Once the shoreline is restored, MPRB should then assess whether a future connection is possible amidst the shoreline restoration.

Formalizing soft surface connections are proposed through the forest on the north, northeast, and east side of Cedar, including a new formal soft surface bicycle trail, beginning at Upton Avenue and travelling north to the Cedar Lake Regional Trail to reduce conflicts between walkers and bicyclists in the forest. A new pedestrian trail proposed is also proposed along the Kenilworth Channel between Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles to increase park visitors' ability to connect between both lakes as was originally intended in the initial design of the park system.

Additionally, along the west side of Cedar Lake, there are additional pedestrian-specific trail segments proposed along the bike trail; currently, the existing pedestrian trail is difficult to access from the road. The parkway and parking lots will also be retained to maintain vehicular access to the park. To improve safety for park visitors crossing the parkway, a number of enhanced intersections have been proposed.

Lastly, a parcel of land to the east of the east of Cedar Lake was identified for future MPRB acquisition and designated as a natural area. The plan formalizes an informal pedestrian connection from the intersection of Douglas Avenue and Kenwood Parkway down to the Cedar Lake Regional Trail. This connection will improve access to the new Bryn Mawr light rail stop for folks traveling from the Lowry Hill neighborhood. See Chapter 5.5 for more details about Cedar Lake circulation.

LEGEND

EXISTING
- Parkway and Parking Lots
- Paved Bike and Pedestrian Trails

PROPOSED
- Formalized Access Path
- Enhanced Intersection Improvements
- Land Acquisition
- On-Street Bike Boulevard (Two-Way)
- One-Way On-Street Bike Lane (arrow indicates direction of travel)
- Parkway Realignment
- Paved Pedestrian Trail
- Paved Two-Way Bike and Pedestrian Trail
- Soft Surface Trail
- Two-Way Paved Bike Trail
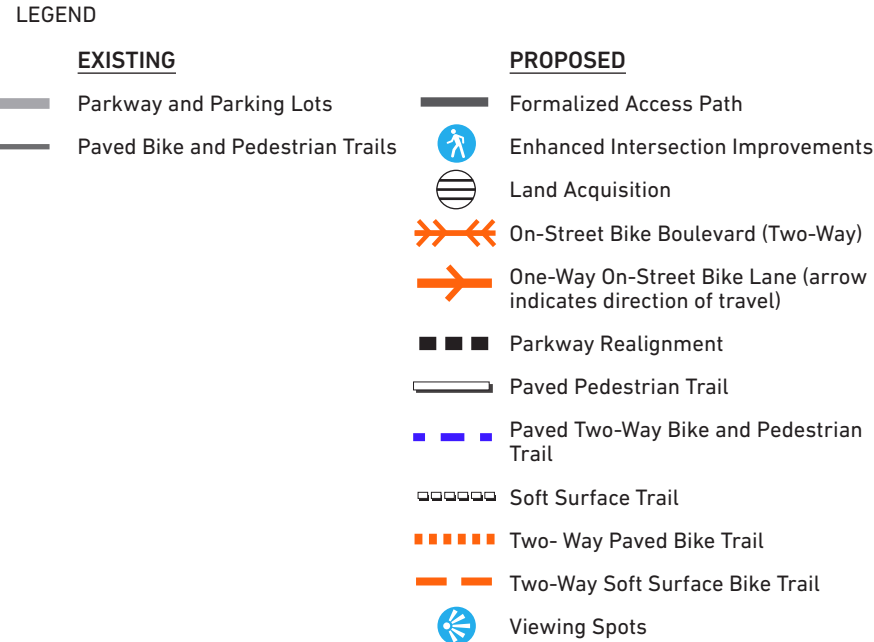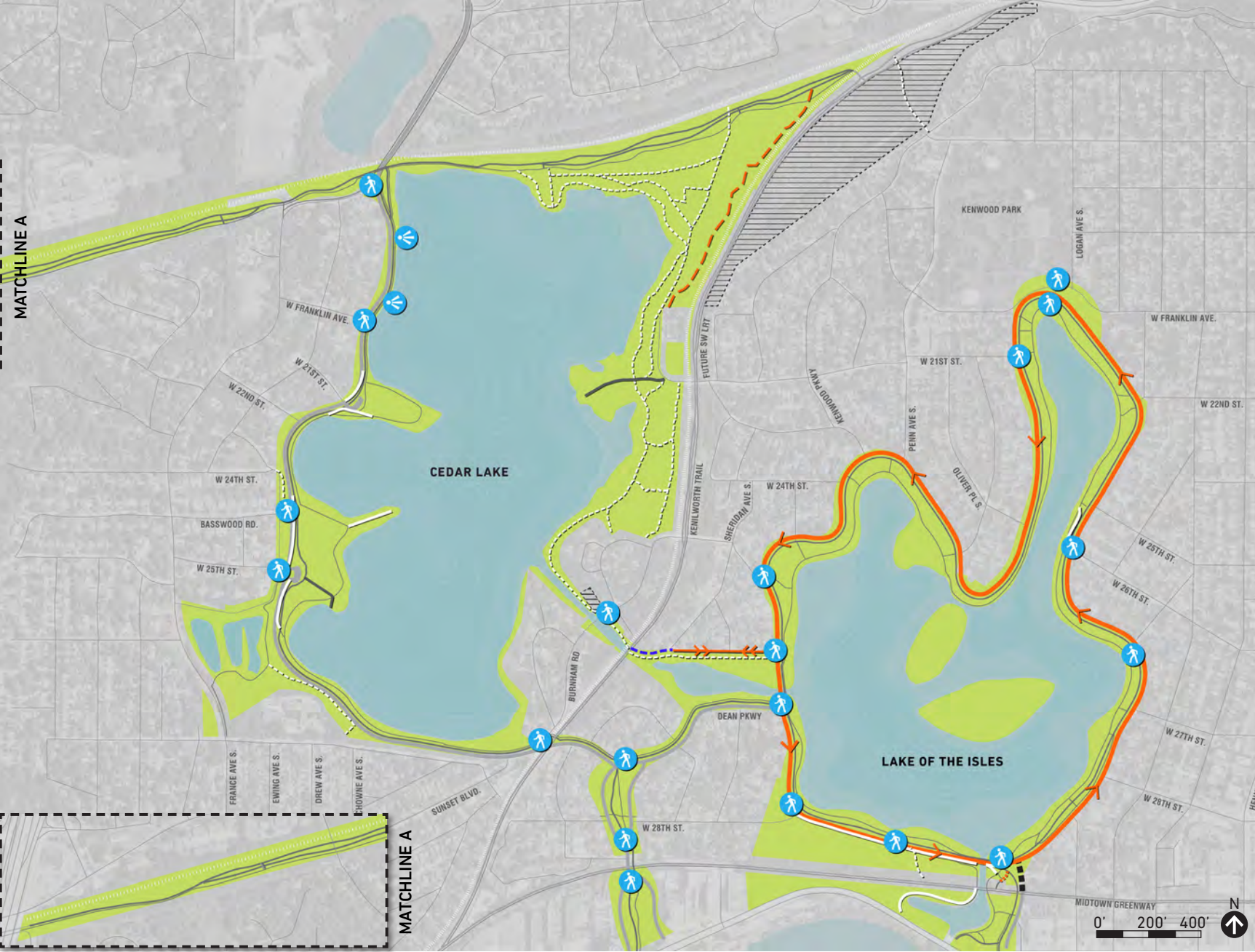- Two-Way Soft Surface Bike Trail
- Viewing Spots

Figure 5.8: Circulation and Access Diagram

Lake of the Isles will retain the current paved bike and pedestrian trails in their same general location, the parkway, and parking bays. The existing paved bikeway will continue to be one-way, opposite vehicle traffic, and will be complimented with a one-way on-street bikeway traveling the same direction as vehicle traffic. The discussion of possibilities for two-way off-street bike traffic around Lake of the Isles was one of the top circulation and access topics, with both strong support and opposition from the public. Through discussion, the CAC reached a compromise and recommended the stated configuration. The CAC also recommended that a raised counterclockwise bicycle path be considered around Lake of the Isles when the parkway is fully reconstructed. Lake of the Isles also has a number of enhanced intersection improvements around the park to connect people to parkland, amenities, and improve safety.

There are a few additional paved pedestrian trails planned along the southern edge of the park providing access to the multi-use fields and dog park, along with formalizing a paved connection of an existing ad hoc trail along the Lagoon between Isles and Bde Maka Ska and finally, realignment of the existing trail near the temporary warming house allows people to walk around the temporary warming house rather than having to trudge through the snow or grass in its current alignment. This realignment improves accessibility though winter and spring for users.

A new soft surface pedestrian connection will connect up to the Midtown Greenway adjacent to the dog park; this trail informally already exists.

No formal trails exist along the Kenilworth Channel today. To expand access in this area and between Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles, the plan proposes a painted two-way bike boulevard along Kenilworth Place and a soft surface pedestrian trail along the channel connecting Lake of the Isles to Cedar Lake, with the trail from Burnham Road towards Cedar Lake following the ad hoc soft surface trail used today. A paved connection has been proposed for both walkers and

bicyclists from Kenilworth Place up to theKenilworth Regional Trail. See Section 5.6 for more detail about what has been proposed.

The paved bike and pedestrian trails and parkway along Dean Parkway will be retained. In areas where possible, the trails should be widened to improve safety. The plan also proposes to improve safety for all transportation modes with enhanced intersection improvements where Dean Parkway intersects with Cedar Lake Parkway, Lake of the Isles Parkway, and on both sides of the Midtown Greenway. No trail changes have been proposed for the Cedar Lake Regional Trail, although the new formal soft surface trails from the remnant lands and northeast forest will provide additional pedestrian access to this trail network.
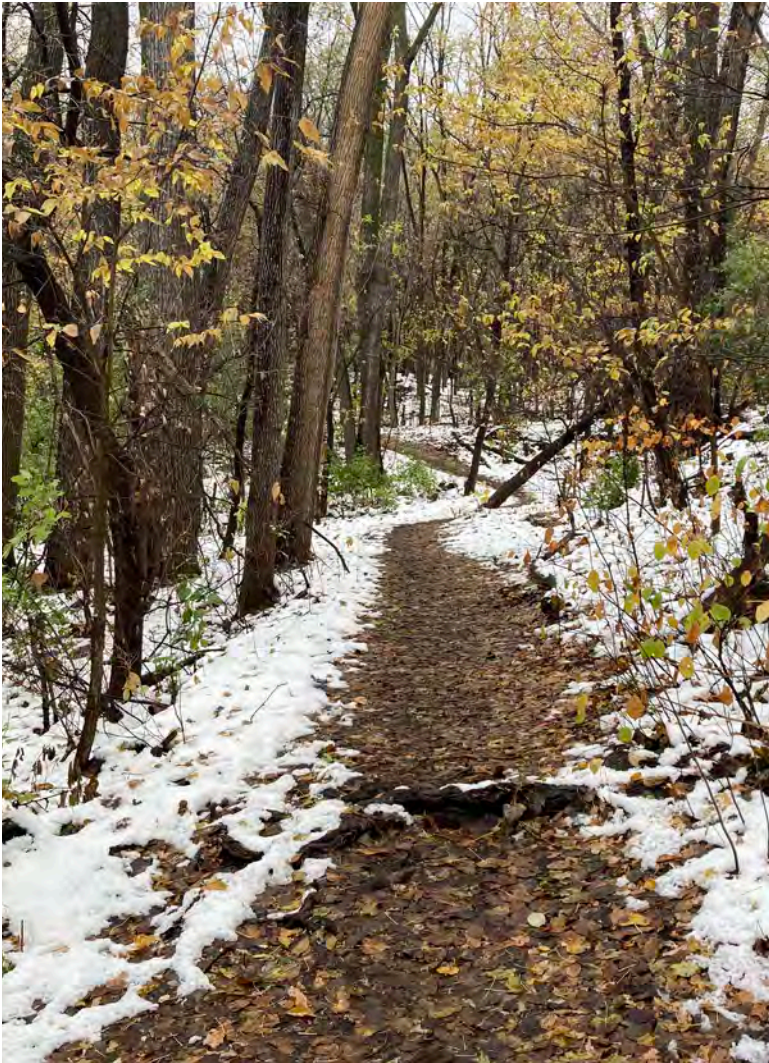
Area to formalize soft surface trails at Cedar Lake. MPRB

Dean Parkway Trails. MPRB

WINTER AMENITIES DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

The project area is used for many winter activities including cross country skiing, ice fishing, ice skating, snowshoeing, community events, walking, and biking. All existing amenities for these activities will be retained. No new winter amenities are proposed at Cedar Lake, Dean Parkway, or the Cedar Lake Regional Trail, but there are a few changes at Lake of the Isles.

The temporary warming house will remain in the same general location and is proposed to be updated with a new structure. To alleviate conflicts between where the warming house sits and the pedestrian path along the shoreline, the path will be re-routed around the temporary warming house location and run parallel to the bike trail for a short distance. Once rerouted, the old section of pedestrian trail will be restored.

Lake of the Isles will also have a new ice-skating ribbon that will extend north from the existing ice rink.

LEGEND

EXISTING

Cross Country Ski Trails

Ice Skating Rink

PROPOSED

Ice Skating Ribbon

Land Acquisition

Paved Pedestrian Trail

Upgraded Temporary Warming House

Ice Skating Rink at Lake of the Isles

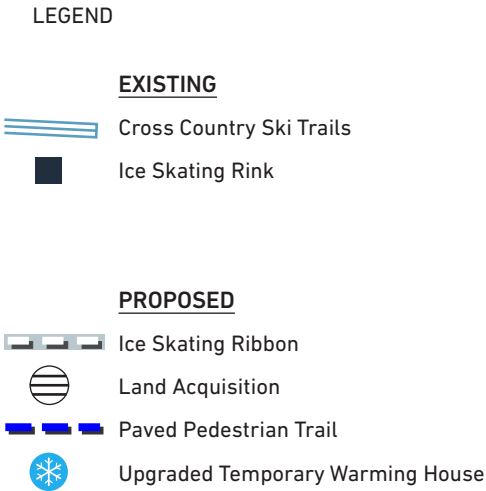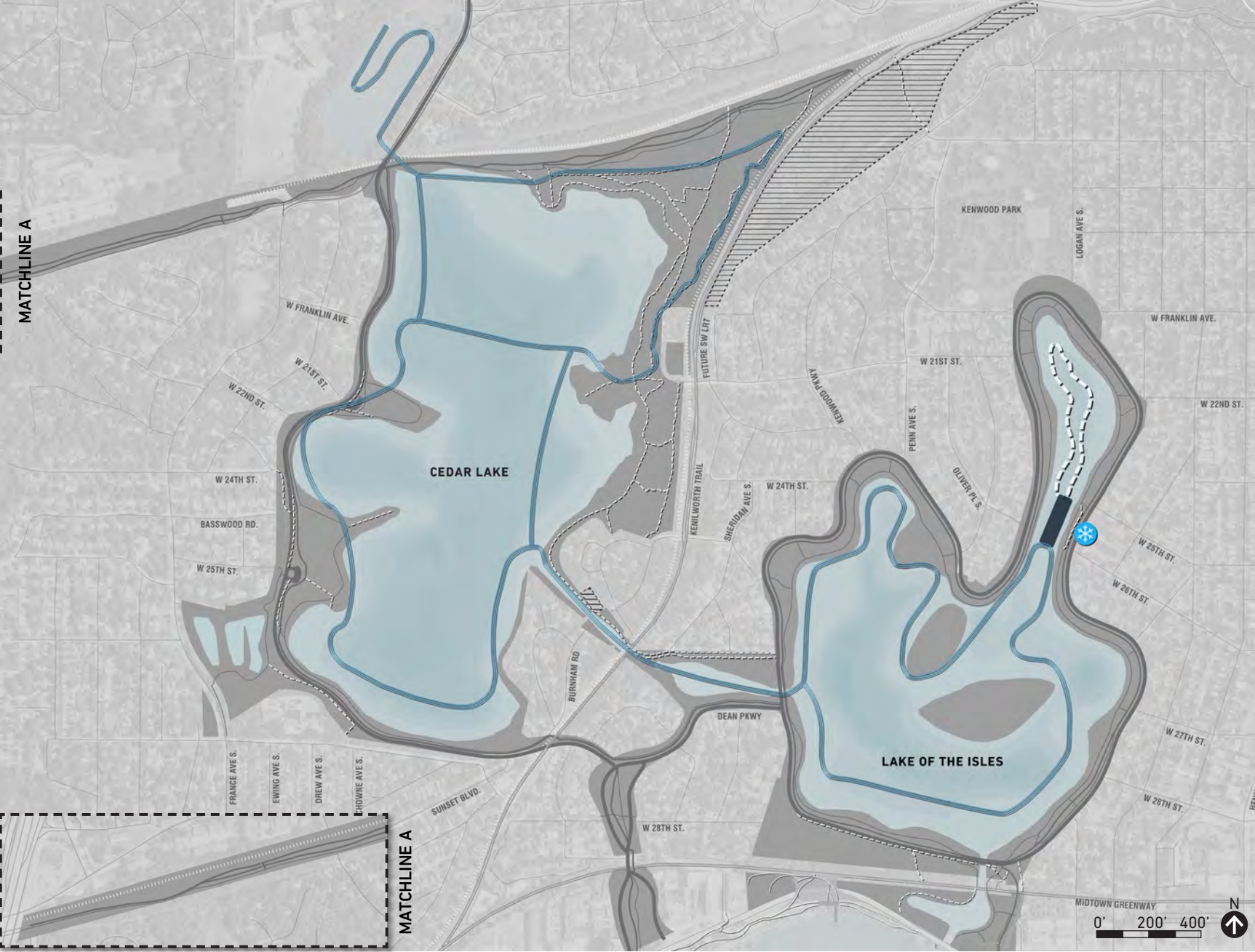Cross Country Skiing on Cedar Lake and Kenilworth Channel. MPRB

Figure 5.9: Winter Amenities Diagram

PROGRAM AND AMENITIES DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

Many of the existing amenities work as is and are enjoyed by people using the parks, trails, and lakes within the project area. To respond to consistent community feedback, the majority of the existing amenities are retained in their same general location. While many current amenities work well, there are a few areas that could benefit from new or modified amenities to support access, accessibility, programming, create a sense of welcome, and anticipated increased park use.

Existing amenities at Cedar Lake include picnic areas, restrooms, canoe racks, a kiosk, and a variety of lake access opportunities. New amenities for Cedar Lake include a dock, many formalized water access points, viewing spots, a picnic area, and enhanced welcome entry points.

At Lake of the Isles, existing amenities include one year-round and one seasonal restroom, canoe racks, kiosks, a variety of lake access opportunities, multi-use fields, and a dog park. New amenities include a dock, a few formalized water access points, some picnic areas, and enhanced welcome entry points.

With the many activities available through the project area, amenities that support comfort, accessibility, welcome, and the ability for people to stay in the park for longer periods of time are important considerations for the future. One of the ways the plan supports these considerations is by modifying and expanding restroom options within the project area. Today, many of the restrooms throughout the project area are portable with one permanent restroom at South Cedar Lake Beach. The mixture of permanent versus portable restrooms and the overall number was a consistent topic throughout engagement and there was not universal agreement about type or quantity. At Cedar Lake, existing restrooms are well spaced and in

LEGEND

EXISTING
- Beach Water Access
- Boat Launch
- Canoe Rack
- Dock
- Dog Park
- Kiosk
- Multi-Use Fields
- Permanent Restroom
- Picnic Area
- Portable Restroom
- Water Access: Stone Steps

PROPOSED
- Dock
- Enhanced Welcome Entry Point
- Formalized Water Access
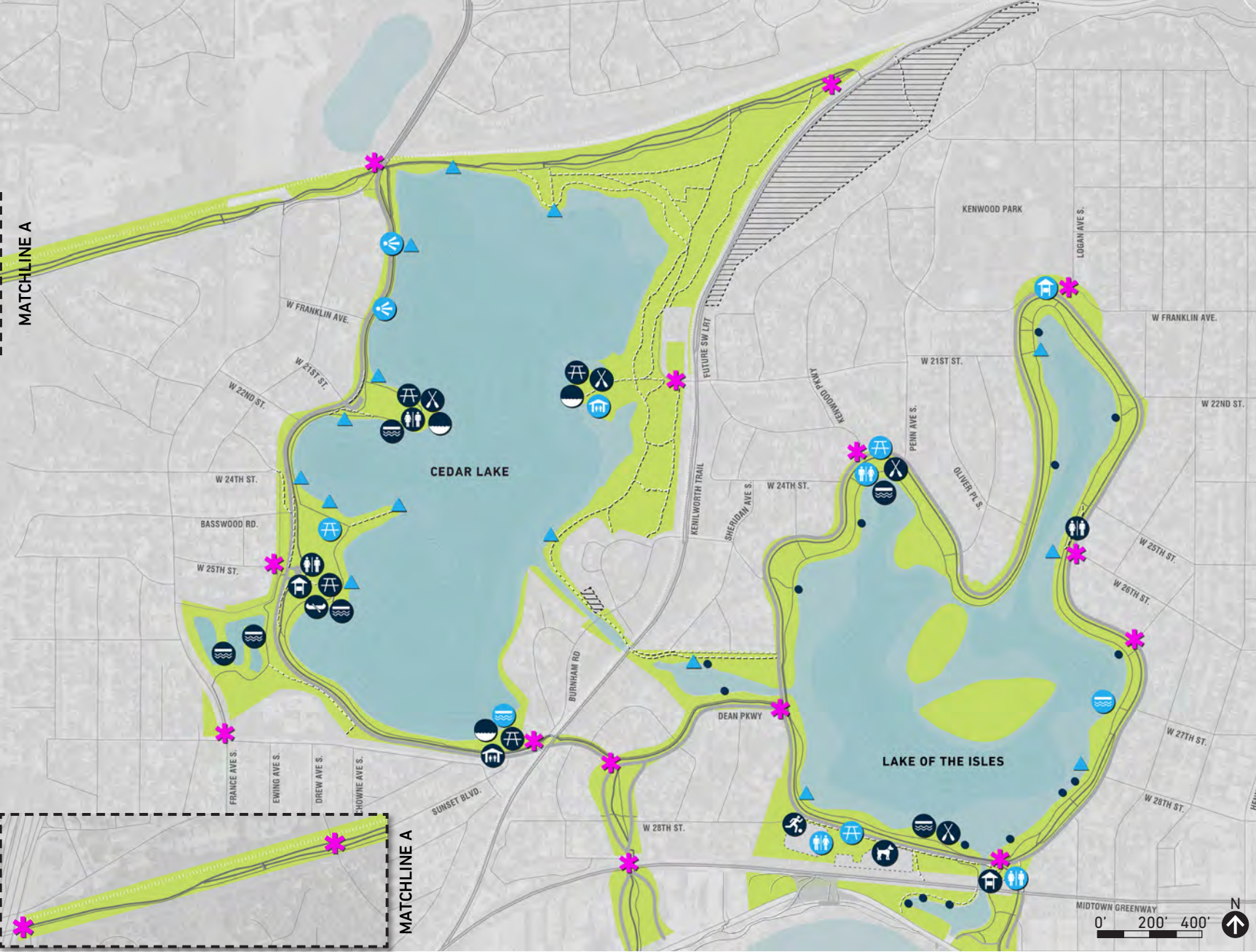- Kiosk Relocation
- Land Acquisition
- Permanent Restroom and Storage
- Picnic Area
- Portable Restroom
- Viewing Spot

Figure 5.10: Program and Amenities Diagram

areas where groupings of amenities exist. A change from portable to permanent restroom is proposed at Cedar Lake East Beach where there are a variety of activities, including swimming, that could benefit from having a permanent option. For Lake of the Isles, the plan proposes to expand the number of restrooms near groupings of existing and proposed amenities at the northwest side of the lake and the multi-use fields to the south.

Cedar Lake Regional Trail and Dean Parkway do not currently have any major amenities outside of trails and roads, and the plan proses to add a few enhanced welcome entry points which will support navigation through these transportation-heavy portions of the project area.

Viewing spots and lake access opportunities will expand the ways in which people will be able to enjoy the park and are informed by existing uses and opportunities. These improvements are described in further detail under Access and Circulation Recommendations and Lake Access Recommendations but are included here to show the variety of available land and water activities these amenities support.

To welcome and guide people into and around the project area, many locations along road or trail intersections are proposed to have enhanced welcome entry points. These entry points will build upon existing signage and include welcome and wayfinding signage and some locations may include other amenities such as seating areas, bike racks, city bikes, gardens, and/or water fountains. There are sixteen enhanced welcome entry points throughout the project area including four along Cedar Lake Regional Trail, five through Cedar Lake, one along Dean Parkway, and six around Lake of the Isles.

People canoeing on Lake of the Isles. MPRB

South Cedar Lake Beach. MPRB

Dock on Lake of the Isles. MPRB

Shore fishing at Lake of the Isles MPRB

INTERPRETATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Each story thread offers a range of interpretive learning style opportunities that engage visitors through embedded design elements. Site-wide messaging spans the entire site and communicate that the lakes, trails, and parkland contribute to larger ecological systems and community networks. Refer to section 5.3 Interpretation for more detail on story threads, messaging, and themes.

Recommendations for site-wide messaging will include:

• Welcome Entry Points: interpretive feature or gateway element

• Water access points: Interpretive features, panels, or interactive elements

• Along trails: Interpretive signs, tactile elements, audio posts, or story walks

• At key plant community areas: interpretive panels

•

LEGEND

PLAN AREA TO EXPLORE OVERARCHING THEME

AREAS TO EXPLORE INTERPRETIVE SUBTHEMES

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SELF-GUIDED INTERPRETATION

Existing Boat Launch

Existing Dock

Existing Water Access: stone steps

Proposed Dock

Proposed Enhanced Welcome Entry Point

Proposed Formalized Water Access

Proposed Land Acquisition
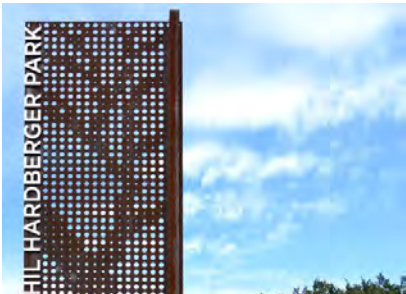
Proposed Viewing Spot

Figure 5.11: Interpretation Diagram
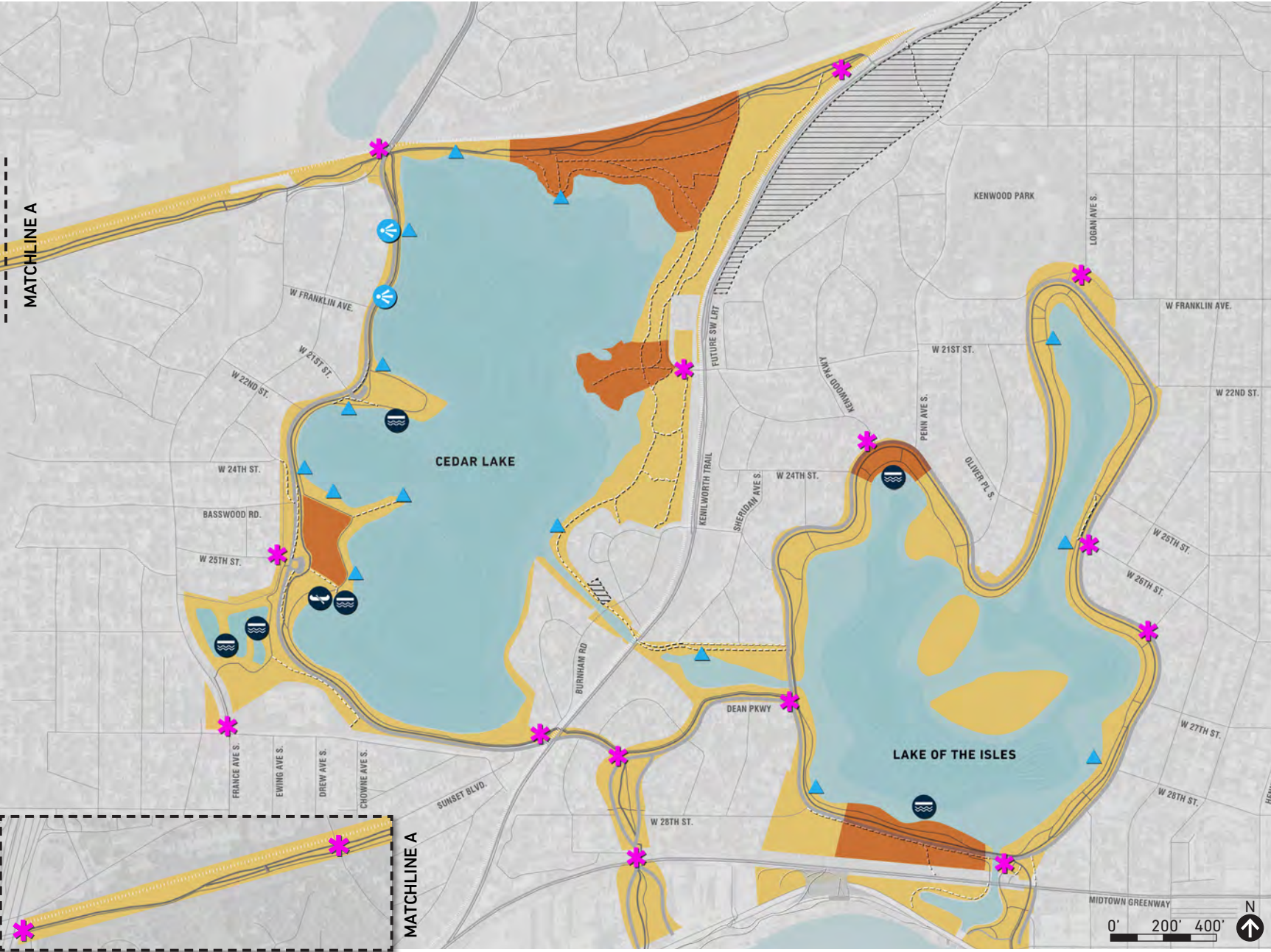
INTERPRETIVE PANEL
self-guided

ENTRY WELCOME POINTS
self-guided

GATHERING PLACES
guided

INTERPRETIVE FEATURES
self-guided or guided

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Tactile signs that enrich visitors' understanding of the lakes with hands-on elements or relevant facts.

Kiosk, seating, and bike racks, with integrated tactile elements, facts, and stories about the park.

Gathering areas with descriptive information about the adjacent area, interpretive art, and hands-on elements.

Unique outdoor features that focus on a specific topic and create opportunities for physical activity, interactive art, or other interactive interpretive elements.