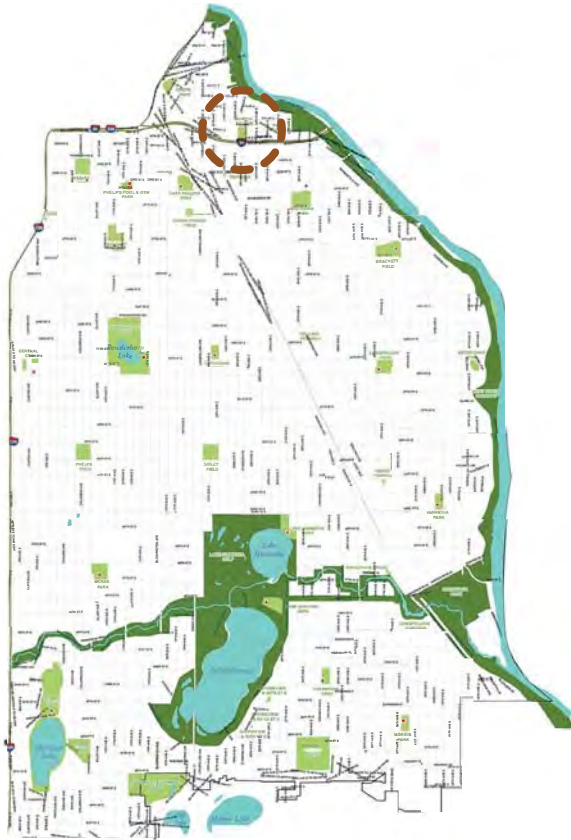


MURPHY SQUARE

LOCATION AND HISTORY

Murphy Square is, yes, a square completely surrounded by the Augsburg University Campus in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood just north of I-94. It is bounded by 7 ½ Street, 23rd Avenue, Butler Place, and 22nd Avenue. It sits just west of the Augsburg football stadium and just north of a pedestrian bridge across I-94 that connects to the Seward Neighborhood.

Murphy Square is Minneapolis's first park. It's was named for Edward Murphy, who donated the land for a park when he platted Murphy's Addition in 1857. (The name was officially changed from Murphy Park



to Murphy Square in 1890.) Parks were in the news in 1857: New York City conducted a competition to design its vast Central Park, one of the most important developments in the creation of urban parks in the country's history. That event may have influenced Murphy's establishment of a park on land he was developing. Murphy Park was a long way from the center of the small towns of Minneapolis and St. Anthony at the time and the land served as little more than a cow pasture for twenty years. In 1873 Murphy attempted to get the city council to pay to improve the land. Trees were planted in the park, perhaps under the direction of Charles Loring, who is said to have planted the first trees in Minneapolis and was a city council member at the time.

The park was transferred from the city council to the new park board shortly after the park board was created in April 1883. The park board hired Landscape architect Horace Cleveland to create a plan for the park in late 1884. Murphy Square was one of several parks immediately improved by Theodore Wirth when he was hired in 1906. He implemented additional plantings and changed some of the paths in the park. An artesian well was also dug at Murphy Park that year, but the city condemned as unfit the water produced by the well.

Murphy Square was one of the parks recommended as a playground in 1906, when the park board installed its first playground equipment, and a merry-go-round was installed in 1907. A tennis court was built at Murphy Square in 1917, but it was removed in 1919 with the explanation that there wasn't sufficient space for it. Some residents of the neighborhood petitioned the park board to install a kittenball (softball) field in the park in 1922, but opposition from other property owners led the park board to reject the idea.

With the growth of Augsburg College, Murphy Square became, in essence, a central square for the college. The park board entered into serious negotiations with

the school to sell the square to the college in 1957. When those negotiations were unsuccessful, the park board included Murphy Square on a list of properties it could part with, for housing purposes, in 1960. In 1975, the park board considered a land swap with Augsburg College that would have transferred the park to the college, but once again the city's oldest park remained a park.

Ultimately, only a small piece of Murphy Square was lost, and that was due to the construction of the I-94 freeway, which nipped off a bit of the park in the 1960s.

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND CHARACTER

Today, Murphy Square is, essentially, Augsburg's central quad. Most park users are students, and many students move through the park from one class to another. Picnic tables are scattered throughout and are used for individual and group studying. There are no active recreation facilities in the park.

MPRB currently has an operating agreement with Augsburg University that tasks the college with maintenance and allows it to program the park. MPRB has little responsibility for the park other than ownership and potentially capital investment. Augsburg has prepared a long-term master plan that it is implementing over time. The master plan envisions improvements to Murphy Square.

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PARKS

Wayfinding and connections from Murphy Square should focus on:

- A connection through the college campus to the City of Minneapolis bicycle/pedestrian route on Riverside Avenue



Existing Conditions: Murphy Square



Proposed Plan: Murphy Square

NEW/ ADDED



Group Shelter



Outdoor Gathering Space

THE PROPOSED DESIGN

The plan for Murphy Square reinforces the current pathway layout, but makes some modifications based on both the Augsburg Master Plan and discussions with Augsburg facilities staff. East-west circulation in the park is simplified with a linear double walkway, to allow easy transit from one side of campus to the other. This walkway is lined with small shelters, study kiosks and nooks, and outdoor desks potentially equipped with charging stations and wi-fi. This pathway becomes a study corridor, offering varied opportunities for college students to get outdoors and learn.

Several smaller paths are added to improve circulation within the park, and two central paths reaching south from the center of the park are removed. This creates a larger open space without trees, to allow for impromptu games of frisbee, football, soccer, and whatever else.

The center of the park would be a great location for a significant public artwork.

As Minneapolis's first park, Murphy Square should remain a park and be available to the general public. The fact is, however, that it will mostly be used by the college. The plan therefore, improves its function as a quad, with unique study areas, easy circulation, and open space for games.

KNOWN LAND USE AND COORDINATION ISSUES

At the time of the SSAMP process, the agreement with Augsburg University was about to expire. MPRB and Augsburg should renew the agreement with an eye to capital improvement associated with the campus master plan.

PROCESSES

	1: General Input Spring-Fall 2015 <i>Input themes prior to initial concepts</i>	2: Initial Concepts Fall-Winter 2015/2016 <i>Input themes on initial concepts</i>	3: The Preferred Concept Now <i>Key elements of the concept</i>
aquatics	no comments →	no comments →	No aquatic facilities planned for this park
play	no comments →	no comments →	No formal play facilities planned for this park
athletics	no comments →	no comments →	No formal athletic facilities planned for this park
courts	no comments →	no comments →	No courts planned for this park
winter	no comments →	no comments →	No formal winter facilities planned for this park
landscape	Augsburg College has a long-term master plan that shows some changes to Murhpy Square →	Like opening up of southern green space for impromptu games and gathering Augsburg design shows a major east-west pathway to connect the campus	Addition of east-west pathway, in consideration of campus master plan, and several other paths to improve circulation within and through park Removal of some paths in the southern half of the park to create open gathering / play area
other	no comments →	Like inclusion of study areas for students, consider internet access, good work tables, etc. →	Addition of study shelters along main east-west pathway

COST ESTIMATE

Asset Type	Project	2017 ESTIMATED COST/PROJECT	Implementation Sequence	Prioritization Category	Applicable SSAMP Actions
Other	Study shelters	\$ 361,400	with some path renovation	CONTINGENT	16, 17
Other	Public Art	\$ -	stand-alone	CONTINGENT	16
Other	Renovate walking paths	\$ 274,821	stand-alone	CONTINGENT	16, 17
Other	Miscl. signs, trees, furniture	\$ 11,025	with other projects, as appropriate	CONTINGENT	9
n/a	Agreement with Augsburg that addresses capital improvements	\$ -	stand-alone	PLANNED	15
TOTAL		\$ 647,246			

NOTE: Implementation of the study shelter and public art is dependent on leadership by Augsburg.

OPERATIONS ESTIMATE

FACILITIES	Total Per Unit Operations Cost	△ Qty	△ Cost
Outdoor Gathering Space	\$ 10,000	1	\$ 10,000
Group Shelter	\$ 4,000	1	\$ 4,000
Difference			\$ 14,000