



Date of Board P+C: 7/7/2021

Date of Board Approval (for CAC's only): n/a

Date of Most Recent Update: 9/5/2023

Please fill out this form if your project, program, or initiative includes community engagement beyond the "Inform" level. All Community Engagement Plans should be filed as Petitions and Communications with the MPRB Board of Commissioners and submitted to the MPRB Engagement Portal on SharePoint (A link to the Community Engagement Portal can be found at <https://minneapolis.parks.sharepoint.com/planning/SitePages/Home.aspx>.)

Staff Lead: Adam Arvidson

Department or Division: Planning

Project Name: North Commons Phase 1 Implementation

Engagement Level: Consult (See Engagement Assessment attached)

This plan serves as a guide for the community engagement process for the **North Commons Phase I Implementation project**. The plan may be modified as circumstance warrants during project duration. Substantial modifications are to be communicated to stakeholders and the MPRB Board of Commissioners.

As required by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Community Engagement Policy, this project requires a Community Engagement Plan because the project falls under the **Consult** category of community engagement for which MPRB is required to obtain stakeholder feedback on project, initiative, or program analysis, alternatives, or decisions. This CE Plan was used with a GARE Racial Equity Tool Kit framework.

Key Stakeholders should be engaged in the creation of this plan. This is to be filled out before the CE Plan is submitted to the Board as a P+C. Please explain how they were engaged:

Neighborhood organizations and community advocacy groups (noted in section 3) and the Community Advisory Committee from the North Service Area master plan were invited to comment on the draft community engagement plan prior to and concurrent with submittal to the Board of Commissioners. Comments from these stakeholders will be incorporated into the CE Plan throughout the project.

1. Project Description

1a. Project Overview:

The project will focus on improvements to the Community/Recreation Center, water park features, and parking. Improvements will include the demolition of the current recreation center and replacement with a new community center that will serve the various needs of the North side, including expanded

gym space, community rooms, arts and media spaces, and youth oriented gathering spaces. Parking will be reconfigured in a new location. The waterpark is planned to be expanded and largely rebuilt farther east and could include a variety of options. It is important to note that a wading pool/splash pad will be included in this area but should remain fee-free as a replacement for the existing wading pool. If there is any remaining funding available, prioritization of additional potential project(s) will be discussed with the community.

1b. MPRB Outcomes *(What goals, strategies, or values in the MPRB Comprehensive Plan does this project, program, or initiative relate to? What goal in the Racial Equity Action Plan does this relate to?):*

Comprehensive Plan

- Goal: Parks shape an evolving city
- Goal: Parks are safe and welcoming by design
- Value: Responsiveness and Innovation

Racial Equity Action Plan

- E: The MPRB provides programs and services that are responsive and reflective of community needs.

1c. Project Timeline:

June-August, 2021: completion of CE Plan, issuance of consultant RFP, selection of consultant

July-September, 2021: initial general community engagement

September-December, 2021: programmatic design and feasibility analysis, with cost estimates, including community engagement

January-December, 2022: schematic and detailed design, including community engagement, and construction plans

April/May, 2022: public hearing on programmatic and schematic design

January-April, 2023: construction bidding and award

2023 and 2024: construction (final timeline to be determined in consultation with MPRB staff and community members)

1d. Project Funding:

<u>Capital Sources</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Expiration</u>
MPRB CIP: 2020 NPP20 Funds	\$800,000	n/a
MPRB CIP: 2021 NPP20 Funds	\$800,000	n/a
MPRB CIP: 2021 Neighborhood Capital Levy Funds	\$200,000	n/a
State G.O. Bonds	\$5,000,000	TBD

<u>Supplemental Sources</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Expiration</u>
Park dedication available in Willard Hay (pending community support and MPRB approval)	\$49,362	n/a
Community and foundation support	TBD	n/a
Total:	\$6,800,000 secured	

2. Project Data:

2a. What are the boundaries of the community engagement area? *(For regional facilities include neighborhoods adjacent to the park and city/regional boundaries)*

North Commons Park is located in the Willard Hay neighborhood, and is surrounded by the Near North, Hawthorn and Jordan neighborhoods. These four neighborhoods are represented by the Census Tracts: 22, 27, 1013, 1020, 1021, 1208, 1029, and 1257.

2b. What are the demographics of the community engagement area? *(Please refer to percentages of the population when possible and note the sources of the data.)*

Total Population

Neighborhoods (Local)	City
19,757	429,605

Race by Percentage of the Population

Race	Local	City
White	19.2%	60.4%
Black or African American	42.7%	19.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native	2.3%	0.8%
Asian	16.3%	4.8%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%
Hispanic or Latino	8.6%	9.8%
Some other race alone	4.2%	0.5%
Two or more races	6.6%	4.3%

Median Age:

Local (averaged)	City
26.35	32.2

Age Group	Percentage of the Population (Local)	Percentage of the Population (City)
Under 5 Years	9.4%	6.8%
5-9 years	10.4%	6.0%
10-14 years	10.1%	4.9%
15-19 years	9.6%	6.1%
20-24 years	8.2%	9.1%
25-34 years	15.9%	22.3%
35-44 years	13.0%	14.9%
45-54 years	9.3%	9.9%
55-59 years	3.4%	4.7%
60-64 years	3.7%	5.0%
65-74 years	4.6%	6.5%
75-84 years	2.1%	2.9%
85+ years	0.3%	1.0%

It should be noted that Census Tract 1028 (the tract that North Commons is located in) has the highest percentage of seniors aged 85+ as compared to all other census tracts included in this demographic analysis. Adjacent tracts 27 and 1257 also have high senior populations.

Median Household Income:

Local (Averaged)	City
\$44,262	\$65,889

***It should be noted that Census Tract 1028 (the tract that North Commons is located in) has the lowest average Median Household Income when compared to the rest of the census tracts included in this demographic analysis, at \$35,500.*

Percentage of the Population That Speaks A Language Other than English at Home:

Local	City
34.3%	20.4%

Asian and Pacific Island languages are the most commonly spoken languages other than English spoken in households in these Census Tracts (with 16.2% of the population speaking Asian and Pacific Island Languages), "other" languages were second most popular at 10.3%, then Spanish at about 7.0%, and finally other Indo-European languages at almost 1%. These trends differ from the City of Minneapolis (The most commonly spoken language other than English in the City as a whole is Spanish at 7.9% then 'other' languages at 7.4%, then Asian and Pacific Island Languages at almost 4% and finally, other Indo-

European languages at 2.8%). This trend demonstrates that there is a high need for translated engagement materials in the typical Hmong, Spanish and Somali, as well as potential for additional translation needs (AAPI communities, aside from a large Hmong population, Minneapolis also has large Asian Indian, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean populations although the Hmong population is nearly 2x greater than the next closest, Asian Indian, population)

Percentage of the Population with a Disability:

Local	City
14.3%	11.0%

**It should be noted that in Census Tract 1028 (the tract that North Commons is located in) has a higher than average percentage of the population with a disability (17.3%) when compared to the rest of the census tracts included in this demographic analysis.*

Percentage of the Households with a Computer:

Local	City
89.2%	95.5%

Percentage of the Households with Broadband Internet Subscriptions:

Local	City
74.1%	87.4%

Data source for all tables: 2019 American Community Survey 5-year estimate

2c. List any key findings or excerpts from relevant plans or policies that are informing this project, program or initiative, especially if community was engaged in the policy or plan:

This project will primarily be informed by the North Service Area Master Plan. The plan was adopted in 2019 and unfolded over the course of approximately 1.5 years with significant community engagement. The plan includes specific projects for the 31 neighborhood parks, including North Commons, and 3 regional trails included in the North Service Area (defined for this project as the area north of I-394 and west of the Mississippi River). The community input included in the process matrices in the plan for North Commons will help guide and inform the improvements during this portion of the project. Guiding principles within the plan will also help to guide improvements, which include but aren't limited to: partnership and coordination, design and construction, programming and access, and operations and maintenance. Specifically, the design and construction process for the recreation center and waterpark will take the following guiding principles into account:

- 1: seek partnerships
- 2: ensure agreements do not limit access

- 4: welcoming facility design
- 5: minimize tree removal
- 6: protect trees
- 7: replace trees
- 8: consult with north side community
- 9: minimize visual impacts
- 10: reduce community impact through phased construction

2d. What are the data gaps? What additional research needs to be done to understand the project stakeholders and project scope?

The principal data gap is knowledge of demographic characteristics of users of North Commons Park specifically. Though there is broad understanding of the demographics of the surrounding neighborhoods, we do not feel these are an appropriate measure for the single park area. Throughout the project, it will be important to engage directly with park and recreation center users, and to work with Recreation Division staff to ensure appropriate representation in engagement.

3. Community Engagement:

The MPRB supports the use of a variety of techniques to interact with and obtain information from stakeholders. Outreach and research tools and methods can be applied for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to the following:

- a. Evaluate success and measure community impact of existing programs, services or facilities.
- b. Gain stakeholder insight and perspective regarding development of a new program, service or facility.
- c. Proactively identify or explore park and recreation trends or ideas.
- d. Determine essential services to be provided for a community or park area.
- e. Query stakeholders when proposing or revising policy.
- f. Resolve persistent conflicts or problems.
- g. Educate or inform the public on proposed changes, initiatives and projects.
- h. Reflect on projects, programs and initiatives after adoption by the Board or report on how community input has been integrated.
- i. Learn the history of local context and community.

Project Stakeholder <i>(students, ethnic communities, neighborhood groups, community leaders)</i>	Outreach: How will you reach out to the stakeholder? <i>(i.e. go to parks, neighborhood listserv, engage with cultural media)</i>	Engagement: How will they participate? <i>(i. e. online survey, focus group, community open house, intercept survey)</i>	Reflecting Back: How will stakeholder groups be reflected back to about the project progress or outcomes? <i>(Posted on project website, ribbon cutting, e-blast, site visit, celebration)</i>
General park users	On site signage, neighborhood newsletter, social media, attendance at park events, community connectors	Online survey, in-person/virtual/hybrid open house, attendance at park events, community connector events	Project updates via email and project website updates, subsequent in-person/virtual/hybrid open house
Area residents	Postcard mailing, neighborhood newsletter, social media, North Service Area Master Plan listserv, on site signage, attendance at park events, community connectors	Online survey, in-person/virtual/hybrid open house, attendance at park events, community connector events	Project updates via email and project website updates, subsequent in-person/virtual/hybrid open house
Seeds to Harvest (community advocacy group)	Direct e-mail, attendance at meetings	Stakeholder meetings	Stakeholder meetings and one-on-one conversations
Friends of North Commons (community advocacy group)	Direct e-mail, attendance at meetings	Stakeholder meetings	Project updates via email and project website updates, stakeholder meetings, one-on-one conversations
Youth (Public Schools, Achievement Zone, West Broadway, YMCA)	Direct e-mail to youth service organizations/agencies, social media, attendance at park events, community connectors	Online survey, in-person/virtual/hybrid open house, attendance at park or other youth-centered events, community connector events	Project updates via email and project website updates, social media, subsequent in-person/virtual/hybrid open house
Northside Residents Redevelopment Council (NRRC)	Direct e-mail	Online survey, virtual open house, direct engagement at neighborhood organization meeting	Project updates via email and project website updates

North Service Area Master Plan Community Advisory Committee Members and community participants	Direct email, social media, North Service Area Master Plan listserv	Online survey, in-person/virtual/hybrid open house	Project updates via email and project website updates
AAPI Community (Ex. India Association of Minnesota; Chinese American Association of MN; CAPI; Coalition of Asian-American Leaders; Hmong Cultural Center; Fil-Minnesotan Association; Japanese American Society of MN; Korean Association of MN; etc.)	Circulate information through news and communications resources such as Asian American Press, Hmong Broadcasting Company, Hmong Pages, Hmong Times, Korean Quarterly; social media, attendance at park events, community connectors	Online survey, stakeholder meetings with translation, community connector events	Project updates via email and project website updates

If needed, describe the outreach, engagement, or reflection methods you will use that are referenced above:

Community connectors—defined as individuals and/or groups hired by MPRB to perform outreach and engagement of their own devising—were an effective means of engagement during the North Service Area Master Plan. MPRB subsequently used this method on other projects and expects to again hire community members for engagement. Community connectors, as before, will integrate with the lead consultant’s work, but will have independence to devise their own projects. Connectors will be required to provide engagement summaries throughout their project activities.

3a. Advisory Committees:

Technical Advisory Committee: This roster is a list of agencies and groups that are on the TAC
Minneapolis Public Schools (local administration and facilities division)
City of Minneapolis – Public Works, Transportation Planning
City of Minneapolis – Community Planning & Economic Development
Hennepin County Transportation Planning
Metro Transit

Project Advisory Committee: This roster is a list of MPRB departments and divisions that are on the PAC
Asset Management Department
Youth and Recreation Centers Department
Forestry Department
Park Police Department
Community Connections and Violence Prevention Department
Communications Department

3b. Will a Community Advisory Committee be required for this project, program, or initiative? NO

4. Analysis:

4a. What questions will you be asking community to respond to in your outreach and engagement?

- What types of amenities/facilities should be included in the new center?
- How can the waterpark be improved to be more fun and welcoming?
- How specifically can the design of facilities be made welcoming to the north side community (NC Guiding Principle #4)
- What specific design features would minimize visual impact on nearby homes (NC Guiding Principle #9)
- What process should be used around staffing and programming decisions to ensure NC Guiding Principles are met (NC Guiding Principles #11 through #17)

4b. How will your community engagement outreach, engagement, and methods make MPRB a more equitable system?

The neighborhoods selected to focus engagement on are both immediately adjacent and extend slightly further out from the project area. This was done to ensure a broader range of community members are aware of what will be taking place and are invited to provide input as needed.

Because internet access is lower in the area than in the city as a whole, the project will move to in-person engagement as soon as is feasible and safe. Talking to people where they are will be the primary engagement method for this project. This MPRB engagement will be supplemented by community members hired to expand the conversation in creative ways and into community that might be otherwise left out of design processes.

4c. Identify one or more key project milestones when project evaluation will be performed *(i.e. Draft design review, draft policy review, project mid-point)*

Milestone #1: At the conclusion of initial community engagement around the facility program (approximately September/October 2021)

Milestone #2: At the conclusion of schematic design, prior to completion of construction plans and prior to public hearing before MPRB Commissioners (approximately April 2022)

5. Evaluation Summary:

5a. Who was engaged during the process? *Staff made many efforts to engage the local community and ensure that people who engaged with the project were representative of the community demographics. While a majority of the engagement techniques did not provide for a back-end demographic breakdown, most events were well attended by people of color with a wide age range. The online MPRB survey received 30% of the responses from non-white participants, however, the in-person events and specifically the Community Collaborator events, were well attended by more people of color. When we released the Concept Design Options through a large event, most of the attendees were people of color, which exemplifies the communities interest in this project.*

While MPRB staff continue to strive to reach diverse communities in north Minneapolis, our promotion of the project through local press and radio assisted in the expansion of the audience for the project's community engagement.

5b. How did the engagement inform the project outcome? *Input received from the public throughout the community engagement process informed many aspects of the Concept Design including the playground equipment design, the urban design framework, the scope, scale and budget of the project, the building program and the water park design. Additionally, staff heard about community safety concerns and desires to employ the local community through the construction of this project, both of which are included in the Concept Design report.*

5c. Please describe any new or innovative engagement methods used during the process: *Similar to strategies used during the Service Area Long-Range Plans, the project employed the local community to engage local community through a Community Collaborator program. Additionally, staff hosted a Design Week, inviting the public into the design process so they could see how tough design decisions are made and dream with the professional design team to make the park improvements a reality. Through Design Week, community organizations were invited to a morning session where all were asked to participate in imagining how this project could improve areas nearby but not within the park.*

Staff also organized a large Concept Design Options Release Event which was attended by over 150 people. This event provided a full meal and included remarks from the superintendent.

5d. What recommendations do you have for future engagement around this topic, park, or area?

Through this process, we have learned that local media has a large impact on who received information in north Minneapolis. Traditional email newsletters are not sufficient. If you can build trusting relationships with community leaders, this goes a long way to building trust for your organization as a whole.

5e. What, if any, were the unintended outcomes of your CE Plan? *We can always do better and reach more people, I do not believe the CE Plan itself led to any unintended outcomes.*

5g. Were there any barriers to successful implementation of your CE Plan? *MPRB continues to struggle with building trust in north Minneapolis. This project has a budget shortfall so we are likely not able to deliver on the full range of improvements that was originally promised. Finding ways of clearly communicating this message to the community at-large continues to be a struggle for MPRB.*

5h. Were you adequately resourced, including staff support, expertise, and funding? *Yes*

5i. If applicable, how can this project, program, or initiative, or MPRB continue to partner and deepen relationships with underrepresented communities? *The building of trust comes with following through on commitments. The successful implementation of this project could assist in that way. MPRB leadership needs to continue to find opportunities to connect with leadership in north Minneapolis.*