



Date: March 31, 2019

To: Colleen O'Dell, Project Manager Southwest Service Area Master Plan (SSAMP) Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB)

From: Cedar-Isles-Dean Neighborhood Association (CIDNA) Board

**Re: Feedback on CIDNA Neighborhood Park Asset Design Concepts Background**

Thank you for inviting CIDNA to provide feedback on the SSAMP design concepts for the CIDNA neighborhood park assets: Park Siding Park, St. Louis Triangle, Alcott Triangle, Chowen Triangle, and West End Triangle. Neighborhood parks are a longstanding priority in CIDNA as evidenced by ongoing park stewardship agreements and the investment of significant community resources including neighborhood funds and thousands of volunteer hours. The CIDNA neighborhood park assets are utilized year round by residents of CIDNA and support local community gatherings, play time, and provide respite areas and green-space.

**Neighborhood Priorities**

At the start of the SSAMP process, CIDNA met with designated Community Advisory Committee representatives Jana Griffin and Shaelyn Crutchly. Exhibit I of this document summarizes the CIDNA input that was shared with them (May 2018), which remains relevant to the neighborhood priorities and the neighborhood park asset design elements. The following are highlights of these priorities:

- Prefer low impact amenities in triangle parks (movable benches, strategically placed drought tolerant plantings, thoughtfully located new evergreens and shade trees, etc.)
- Desire increased support from MPRB for care taking such as trash/recycling, mowing and grooming as residents often mow the areas
- Enhance pedestrian safety, avoid sightline issues on small triangles surrounded by roads and allow for safe street crossings
- Provide visually pleasing seating, located to optimize view and/or public engagement
- Support free-form imaginative play
- Encourage neighborhood gathering and provide multi-generational spaces
- Support shade trees, evergreens, pollinator gardens, drought tolerant plantings
- Promote fitness activities
- Encourage pet owner responsibility
- Preserve design and function of Park Siding Park which is the result of CIDNA

collaboration with MPRB, represents resident input and is well liked and utilized, design

guidelines were to provide peaceful, multi-generational space

- Reduce visual impact of trash/recycling bins

- Encouraging design options that support safe pedestrian mobility to/from the neighborhood park assets, nearby transit stations, and throughout the CIDNA neighborhood

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The current proposed neighborhood park design concepts do not adequately reflect the aforementioned priorities. Generally the proposed neighborhood park concepts are over-designed and/or destroy valuable open green-space. Examples include:

- Proposed installation of expensive amenities such as public toilets (Alcott Triangle) where folks typically go home to use the facilities. Note that there is a public toilet at Cedar Lake South Beach (regional park), which is located within 0.1 – 0.5 miles from the five neighborhood park assets.
- Proposed skate-park at St. Louis Triangle is redundant as it would be within 0.5 miles of the approved skate-park on the northwest side of Bde Maka Ska as per the Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska - Harriet Master Plan.

***The neighborhood park assets should be evaluated and designed being mindful of other nearby park amenities that exist or are planned/approved. Additionally consideration should be given to the impact of ongoing maintenance costs. The intention of the 20-year plan for neighborhood park funding is to maintain the current level of amenities. However the Service Area Master Plans have an aspirational aspect that may include ideas that are too expensive and may never come to pass. It is not prudent to justify leaving an unwanted design concept in the master plan by saying it will likely will never happen. Generally CIDNA desires more frequent maintenance of existing amenities at the neighborhood parks and additional trees and low profile plantings. CIDNA does not have an appetite for intensive capital investments in the small neighborhood triangle parks.***

***Neighborhood stakeholders should have an opportunity to reconcile the final MPRB Ecological System Plan with the SSAMP design concepts.***

### **Recommendations for CIDNA Neighborhood Park Designs**

The following are design directions for each of the 5 neighborhood park assets; see Exhibit I for more detail.

St. Louis Triangle Park:

- Develop area as a gateway park for a memorable entry to the Cedar-Isles-Dean neighborhood as park is located at neighborhood border/edge
- Discourage/prevent shortcut across railroad freight tracks
- Add shade trees, evergreens, and seating
- Eliminate skate park as a skate park is already approved for the northwest corner of Bde Maka

Ska (0.5 miles away) as per the Bde Maka Ska-Harriet Master Plan

- Confirm property lines to determine available park area
- Correct Minneapolis 2040 plan documents to reflect this area as parkland as the Built Form/Land

Use maps indicate this area as Corridor 6 and not as parkland

Alcott Triangle Park:

- Preserve green-space for play and gatherings
- Evaluate adding flower/vegetable gardens
- Add water source/spigot to support volunteer stewardship agreement
- Add moveable benches
- Extend sidewalk on northern boundary, and improve sidewalk pedestrian access on all sides of

the park

- Confirm property lines
- Eliminate public toilet and bike service station

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Chowen Triangle Park:

- Preserve green-space for play and gatherings
- Add mobile benches/seating
- Consider low impact landscaping (succulents) around perimeter of triangle to create separation

from roads

- Reduce negative visual impact of trash/recycling bins

West End Triangle Park

- Optimize view to Cedar Lake by clearing brush on berm along Cedar Lake Ave
- Re-position existing benches to optimize view the lake
- Preserve green space for play and gatherings
- Plant shade and evergreen trees
- Confirm property lines

Park Siding Park:

- Preserve existing park layout and design which is the result of intense neighborhood input and is

well liked

- Upgrade drinking fountain (design concepts do not reflect this existing amenity)
- Install additional ping pong table near existing ping pong table for tournaments
- Eliminate proposed bike course and splash pad which is within 0.2 miles of Cedar Lake South

Beach

### **Funding Sources**

It is our understanding that neighborhood park improvements will be funded by the 20-year Neighborhood Park Plan (NPP20) which provides for an additional \$11 million of annual funding through 2036. These funds can be used for maintenance, rehabilitation and capital improvements. Expenditure decisions will be prioritized using a data driven, criteria-based model to address racial and economic equity.

Park Dedication Fees may also be used for neighborhood park improvements provided the project meets the criteria of park system expansions or enhancement, such as land acquisition, new recreation facilities or expanded amenities. These funds may not be used for rehabilitation or maintenance. The park dedication fees policy should not be expanded nor modified to allow expenditures on bike lanes, as there are other funding sources for this purpose (Metropolitan Council grants, Hennepin County Highway Funds, etc).

### **Next Steps**

As the SSAMP survey draws to a close, please share survey results with the CIDNA board. Additionally please provide the dates/times/locations of the remaining SSAMP CAC meetings and details of any other related meetings as this information could not be readily located on the project website.

CIDNA residents are active stewards, users, and stakeholders of neighborhood park assets and are eager to review the next iteration of design concepts. The desire is for practical designs, which respect the neighborhood priorities and uses of the neighborhood park assets. CIDNA looks forward to continued engagement with MPRB.

It is our understanding that a regional park initiative for the Greater Cedar Lake Area Master Plan will begin in 2019. CIDNA would like to have representatives engaged in that process. Please keep us informed of timing and opportunities.

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The SSAMP indicates that the master plan for Dean Green and Sunset Boulevard neighborhood park assets will occur at a separate time. CIDNA would like to pursue improvements to Dean Green (easterly and westerly lobes) and Sunset Boulevard. As the upcoming Greater Cedar Lake Area Master Plan is a regional park project, which will have regional CAC representation, it does not seem appropriate to include Dean Green and Sunset Boulevard in that project.

Thank you for your leadership and championing our parks.

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### **Exhibit I CIDNA Committee - Neighborhood Park Assets Design Input (May 2018)**

#### **A. Overall Concerns/Ideas:**

1. Will a resident survey be developed to ask residents what they want? (Potentially can Link with SW park plans and customize by each neighborhood organization).
2. Evaluate what purpose each triangle should serve
3. Determine the exact property lines for each park
4. Determine the allowable expenditures of the NPP20 funding, examples include:
  - Signage “pick up after dogs” and “drive slowly” signs
  - More frequent service/maintenance to each park (lawn mowing, trash removal)
  - Other

**B. CIDNA Neighborhood Park Asset Descriptions:**

**1. St. Louis Triangle located at Chowen Ave & West Lake Street**

**History:** Given to Park Board in 1927. This is a gateway in to the neighborhood.

**Needs/Uses/Concerns:**

- **The Southwest Light Rail will have a station at West Lake Street (under the bridge). As there is no Park and Ride allowed in the city of Minneapolis, rider parking is anticipated to occur in the residential area near this park and beyond once the light rail station is constructed/operational**
- **Recommend MPRB conduct a property survey which accurately delineates property lines of park land and Lake Shores Townhomes property**
- **Design needs to discourage trespassing on railroad property, the unsanctioned path is often used as short cut to shops and restaurants, there have been safety issues in this area (mugging, homeless encampment)**
- **Suggest MPRB inquire as to whether Lake Shores Townhomes would be willing/able to sell any excess land (wooded area next west of the Cedar Lake Shores townhomes). This parcel of land is indicated as Corridor 6 in Minneapolis 2040 map. Expansion of the St. Louis Triangle Park would continue as buffer from high traffic zone, including light and noise impact from SWLRT as well as create a gateway feature to the neighborhood residential area.**

**2. Alcott Triangle located at St Louis Ave & W 29th Street**

**History:** created 1886; Alcott School sat directly west of this land 1921-1940; date for acceptance of deed by Park Board not known.

**Needs/Uses/Concerns:**

- **CIDNA resident(s) stewardship agreement in place with MPRB for volunteer service in this neighborhood park**
- **Recommend new/more benches**
- **Evaluate for expansion of flower garden and/or add vegetable garden, add watering spigot**
- **Improve access and pedestrian safety by extending the sidewalk on the north side all the way**

**to the upper NE point**

3. **Chowen Triangle located at Chowen Ave & W 28th Street**  
**History: 1911; Alfred Dean and brothers sold this and West End Triangle for \$50 to Park Board**

**Needs/Uses/Concerns:**

- **Neighborhood kids actively and frequently use this green space as play area; the surrounding homes' front yard; neighbors like the low profile design, do not want a large/standard MPRB name sign**
- **trash and recycling cans are welcome, but they are an eye sore, would like an aesthetic solution**
- **Mobile benches such as those around Lake of the Isles would be welcome.**
- **Perhaps low profile landscaping would be welcome to serve as separation from the active**

**road.**

- **Avoid a central attraction/feature/amenity given use of space for kids/play and gatherings**

**(soccer, badminton, slack lines, neighborhood picnics, etc.)**

4. **West End Triangle located at Cedar Ave & W 28th Street History: 1911 sold by Alfred Dean and brothers to Park Board**

**Needs/Uses/Concerns:**

- **Confirm property lines**
- **Evaluate adding shade trees and evergreens**
- **Re-locate benches for lake view**
- **Strategically clear berm brush between Cedar Lake Ave and Cedar Lake Parkway to optimize**

**lake view from West End Triangle**

5. **Park Siding Park (PSP) located at 3113 W 28th St**  
**History: Formerly railroad property; CIDNA has a long-standing stewardship agreement with MPRB to care for PSP (over 20years); CIDNA has provided significant funding for PSP amenities including plantings, playground equipment, outdoor ping pong table; CIDNA residents have actively participated in the original design and recent re-design of this park; the annual CIDNA fall festival is held on the PSP lawn. The guiding design principles are to provide a pleasant and peaceful park that appeals to multi-generational park users**

**Needs/Uses/Concerns:**

- **Unclear if light rail construction will impact the use of this park. Community does not want this park to be a staging area for light rail construction. The sewer pipe construction was a big stressor on the community; this area does not want to extend easements to facilitate construction as it interrupts us and displaces park amenities**

- **Replace weathered table tops: checker/chess tops preferred (explore replacing with Azek composite boards that require no maintenance; Shaelyn to reach out to Azek contact to see if possible to donate materials)**
- **Add second ping pong table for tournaments; add mobile bench near ping pong to watch games**
- **Plant lilacs on SE corner along alley**
- **Plant wisteria to climb on pergola**
- **Storage shed to be replaced or refurbished; shed is used by community gardeners with**

**stewardship contract (goal is to keep rodents/critters out)**

- **Shed and portable toilet screen needs to be painted or some type of maintenance (appears**

**rotten). Explore replacing with low maintenance metal structure**

- **Benches need replacement**
- **Water fountain may need to be replaced...this is complicated b/c it is connected to well water**

**and current regulations require new fountains to link to City water, further tie in to city water**

**was previously deemed to be too costly or not possible**

- **Regarding chairs/ benches – prefer seating that could be used as movable chairs (ref. bench project around Lake of the Isles that is funded externally) 6**

## **6. Dean Green located at Dean Parkway with Cedar Lake Parkway as northern border and West Lake Street as southern border**

### **Needs/Uses/Concerns:**

**Easterly Lobe (near Cedar Lake Parkway) -**

- **This was not included as part of the Southwest Service Area Master Plan. Can we include it?**

**(Shaelyn to reinforce with SW CAC)**

- **Don Willeke, with approval from MPRB, planted a lot of the trees in the Dean Green. Over the years there has been a desire to establish a walking tour with informational markers for trees.**

- **Consider water fountain**
- **Establish water pump to encourage stewardship contracts focus on tree care**
- **Evaluate if there is desire to use this as a gathering space**
- **Area serves as key spectator gathering space along the Twin Cities Marathon route**

Westerly Lobe (near Calhoun Beach Club/Lake Street) -

- Update trail marketing's on path (2 way separation)
- Open lawn serves as great open space for sun bathing, games, dog play
- Benches are awkwardly placed, could be improved with mobile seating
- Could be a great space for events (concerts, movies in the park, farmers market, holiday and

tree market); noise may be an issue

- Add signage and waste bag spot for pet owners
- Consider adding water fountain
- Consider calisthenics stations (ala Venice Beach)
- Leverage the space to encourage more community group activities (yoga and outdoor fitness

groups, Bocce Ball court, etc.)

#### **Reference Documents:**

- Southwest Service Area Master Plan  
[https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/park\\_care\\_\\_improvements/park\\_projects/current\\_projects/southwest\\_service\\_area\\_master\\_plan/](https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/park_care__improvements/park_projects/current_projects/southwest_service_area_master_plan/)
- 20-Year Neighborhood Park Plan  
[https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/about\\_us/budget\\_\\_financial/20-year\\_neighborhood\\_park\\_plan/](https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/about_us/budget__financial/20-year_neighborhood_park_plan/)
- SSAMP CAC [https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/\\_asset/1Indoz/SWsamp-CAC-Roster.pdf](https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/_asset/1Indoz/SWsamp-CAC-Roster.pdf)
- Park Dedication Fees

[https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/park\\_care\\_\\_improvements/park\\_dedication/](https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/park_care__improvements/park_dedication/)

- Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska – Harriet Master Plan  
[https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/news/2017/05/03/minneapolis\\_park\\_and\\_recreation\\_board\\_approves\\_calhounbde\\_maka\\_ska-harriet\\_master\\_plan\\_including\\_support\\_for\\_county\\_state\\_and\\_federal\\_process\\_to\\_change\\_name\\_of\\_lake\\_calhoun/](https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/news/2017/05/03/minneapolis_park_and_recreation_board_approves_calhounbde_maka_ska-harriet_master_plan_including_support_for_county_state_and_federal_process_to_change_name_of_lake_calhoun/)