

Cedar Lake Park

**Concept
Master Plan**

**Minneapolis
Park and Recreation
Board**

**and the
Cedar Lake Park
Association**

June 21, 1997

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Introduction

From its beginning, the City of Minneapolis developed in large part because of the wealth of natural resources found throughout the region. Vast pine forests provided the raw materials, the only waterfalls of the Mississippi River generated power and the numerous rivers offered a ready-made transportation system for commerce. The expansion of the railroads and the farming of the fertile soils throughout the region continued fueling the growth and Minneapolis soon became a lumber and grain milling center. Although the relative importance of lumber and grain diminished over time, Minneapolis continues to thrive as a regional center of commerce, transportation, and culture.

Of the city's many attributes, its natural beauty has been cited by both residents and visitors alike. The Mississippi River, three creeks, and numerous lakes truly made Minneapolis a city of water. Fortunately, most of these natural features have been preserved through a highly acclaimed system of parks. Although the first park was established in 1857 with the donation of an undeveloped cow pasture by Edward Murphy, the early development of the park system would not occur for nearly 25 more years. Despite the establishment of the great urban parks such as Central Park in New York City and Grant Park in Chicago, Minneapolis officials were more focused on other priorities. Frustrated by numer-

ous attempts to establish a park system in Minneapolis, citizens took their cause directly to the Minnesota State Legislature. On February 27, 1883, the Legislature established the Minneapolis Board of Park Commissioners as an independent, elected board with its own taxing authority. A city election ratifying the park act took place April 3rd, and on April 27th, the City Council transferred all existing park properties to the custody of the Board.

Spearheaded by the new Board of Commissioners, a bold 100-year vision for parks was born. An eminent landscape architect, Horace W. S. Cleveland, was hired to design the park system. The concept that emerged was to preserve the natural features of the city—the river, streams and lakes—in large picturesque, country-like parks and then link these parks by a system of boulevards and parkways called the "Grand Rounds." By 1905, over 1800 acres of land and waters had been acquired and preserved including Loring, Powderhorn, Logan, Elliot and Farview Parks, portions of parkland in what is now known as Minnehaha, Columbia and Theodore Wirth Parks, along the Mississippi River, Minnehaha Creek and Lakes Harriet, Calhoun and Isles.

During this early history of Minneapolis, Cedar Lake, located northeast of Lake of the Isles, figured more prominently in the early history of the railroads than as a

park. For nearly a century, the land north and east of Cedar Lake had been used as a major train switching yard to serve the growing needs of the Minneapolis/St. Paul region. Despite the presence of the railroad, land was purchased around the perimeter of Cedar Lake between 1908 and 1975 and the lake was eventually connected to the other nearby lakes to create the well-known "Chain of Lakes."

Like grain milling and other industries critical to the growth of the region, the rail industry underwent significant changes during this period. Although the Burlington Northern Railroad still continues to operate daily trains north of Cedar Lake, most of the major railroad facilities were closed in the mid 1980's. Tracks were removed, buildings razed, and the area slowly was reclaimed by nature. Flowers, grasses, shrubs, and trees had taken root on the land and were beginning to transform the area. Wildlife such as deer, foxes, song birds, hawks, and many other species had returned; and people were amazed to discover these creatures thriving in the shadow of the city!

With this excess land no longer needed, the railroad began preparations to sell 28 acres there. Survey stakes soon appeared and developers began inquiring about the property. Concerned about the fate of this land adjacent to Cedar Lake park land, sixty five residents came together in

March, 1989, to discuss the future of this large tract of land less than two miles from downtown Minneapolis. At the initial meeting, citizens proclaimed that this wonderful place had to be preserved in the best interest of the public.

Within a short time, an increasing number of interested citizens determined that the best use of the land would be to combine it with the existing parkland along the lakeshore and call it "Cedar Lake Park." This would be a new kind of park: a wild, yet urban, nature preserve linked by trails to the Mississippi River and other portions of Chain of Lakes Regional Park. In the process, the group developed organizational values designed to involve the greatest number of people possible while minimizing possibilities for conflict. They expressed a desire to work in partnership with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

and other public agencies. Eventually this loose knit group of citizens formed an organization, "Save Cedar Lake Park" (now known as the Cedar Lake Park Association), to lead the acquisition efforts. They vowed to raise the necessary funds and create the support necessary to make this idea a reality.

Through the efforts and contributions of those initial few and many hundreds of people to follow, the property was purchased as park land in 1991. Important as that accomplishment was, it was not the end of the story. Rather, it marked the beginning of a long-range process through which the lands and water of Cedar Lake Park are being restored and developed.

Concept Master Plan

The purpose of this Concept Master Plan is to express the shared vision that has emerged through an eight year process of community learning, organizing and consensus-building, and to suggest direction to guide future planning and stewardship activities. Purposely, the document does not specify how to achieve this vision. Design details and exact locations for trails, amenities, etc. are likewise not included. Those features should be determined in stages

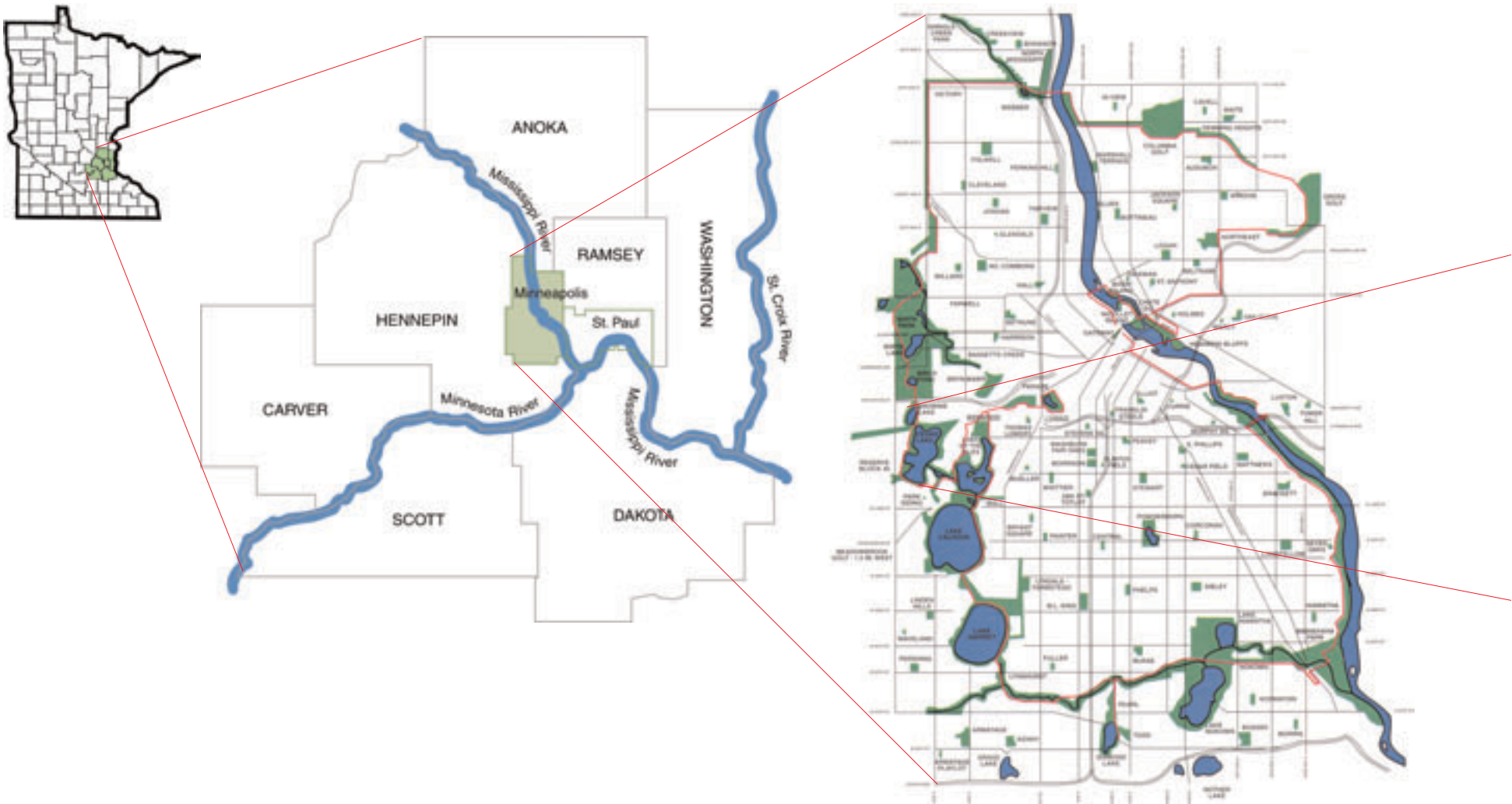
over the next several decades and by many others yet to come. Instead, this concept master plan describes the major considerations for future park development and suggests how to approach them. It provides both the inspiration and broad ideas that will result in many park improvements.

The plan is divided into several sections. The vision for Cedar Lake Park and processes to achieve the long-term

potential for the park are described in the first section. A description of the current landscapes and associated issues follow with recommendations on access, circulation, and use within the park. The third section contains historical background on the lands comprising Cedar Lake Park. The final section describes the lakes and plans to restore the native plant communities once found in the area and throughout the region.



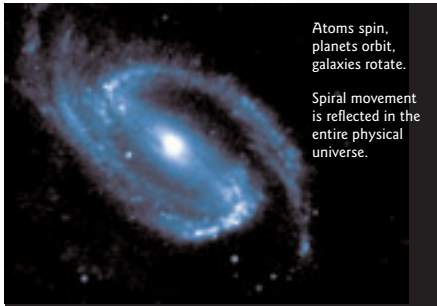
Geographic Context



Cedar Lake Park in 20 Years



Vision, Goal, and Process



Atoms spin,
planets orbit,
galaxies rotate.

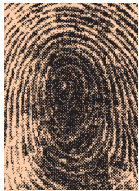
Spiral movement
is reflected in the
entire physical
universe.



The Earth is
enveloped in
spiral currents of
air and water
which sustain all
life and growth.



Spirals appear in
the structures of
countless living
things including
the nautilus,
an uncoiling fern,
and even your
fingerprint.



We have adopted
the spiral as a
symbol of humans
and nature existing
as one in balance
and harmony.



Diana Balmori's spiral-inspired designs for sites in and near Cedar Lake Park: spiral mound on north shore...



land bridge connecting Cedar Lake and Bassett's Creek Trails...



and a design for a metaphorical spring at Cedar Lake Park

Our vision for Cedar Lake Park is to restore the lands and waters and create a new Community with Nature through which we can transform ourselves, our city, and our society.

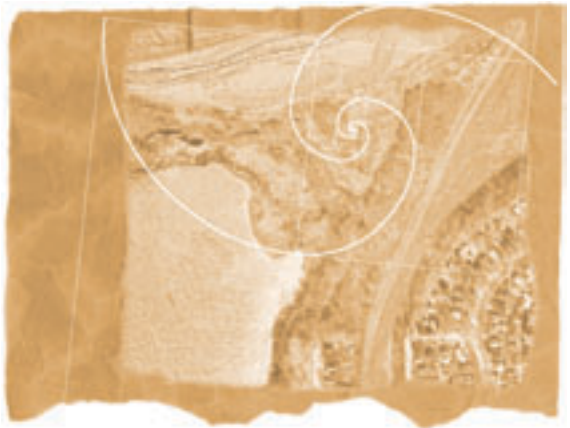
Our Goal for Cedar Lake Park is to bring people and nature together in harmonious community... a goal symbolized by the spiral.

Cedar Lake Park is situated within the banks of an ancient riverbed. A glacial river flowed here over ten thousand years ago, until the river cut a new channel where the Mississippi River now flows. Remaining along the river's old route was a series of depressions which eventually became the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes.

Of the lakes within the chain, only Cedar Lake's marshes and nearby woodlands and meadows reflect a natural character. The park contains remnants of diverse, native plant communities, and holds the potential for restoring a wide range of regional landscapes and wildlife communities.

Cedar Lake Park is a place to preserve, nurture, and sustain through the next century and beyond. Moreover, it is a fitting place where the greater urban community can invest its attention, efforts, and resources in learning how cities can exist and flourish while in harmony with nature.

Within the dry and ancient riverbed, a river of earth awareness can symbolically flow from Cedar Lake Park, to touch and transform our urban environment.



Design for Cedar Grove by Steve Durrant of Jones & Jones

Step 1. Establish a Sanctuary in the Center of the Park

We will establish the heart and center of the park where a spring of water once flowed. You might bring a pebble here as an offering. We'll plant a grove of trees here to honor those we love.

A variety of special sites will be developed to help people become connected with and marvel at the amazing “web of life.” Some of these places will be quiet, contemplative sites that frame a beautiful view, celebrate the mystery of our existence, or offer a sense of spiritual well-being. Some will provide trail amenities offering hospitality to park sojourners; others will provide outdoor ‘laboratories’ which will engage children, families and adults in formal environmental inquiry. Most sites will function as

places where people can become physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually connected with the land, geographically oriented to it and more familiar with the plants and animals living there.

All sites and, indeed the entire park, will offer sufficient physical design features, amenities, and communication components necessary to promote learning, respect, and civility among park users. In order to establish a strong bond between people and the land, every site will be developed with the sig-



nificant involvement of citizens who will act in leadership, planning, funding, and volunteer labor capacities.



Step 2. Establish a System of Trails

We will create a system of trails that will facilitate walking, quiet, and contemplation. The trail system will also promote the use of bicycles and other non-motorized forms of transportation. It will link the park to all parts of the urban area.



Step 3. Establish Destinations along the Trails

Along the trails we will enhance and create sites to engage people with nature. These will be places which foster physical, intellectual, and spiritual growth.



Step 4. Establish Community Connections

By connecting many people, places, and communities with nature and one another, we will contribute to the city’s regeneration and higher quality of life.

People, Parks, and a Process

1989	1990	1991	1992
Surveyor stakes appear on land Citizens form "Save Cedar Lake Park" (SCLP) Over 800 people sign vision endorsement "Nurture Nature" T-shirts and "Save Cedar Lake Park" Buttons sold to raise money Mayor of Minneapolis endorses vision and makes personal contribution	MPRB commissions Wirth Design Associates to prepare a feasibility study and establishes the first Citizen Advisory Committee to evaluate idea of Cedar Lake Park and Trail. Wirth study concludes the park and trail would be beneficial in keeping with H.W.S. Cleveland's vision for the park system. The circular Grand Rounds could become a figure 8 through this new connection between the lakes and the Mississippi River. SCLP commits to raising one third of funds needed for acquisition Major donors pledge \$335,000 toward purchasing the property Key civic leaders and legislators pledge support	Metropolitan Council's Park and Open Space Commission approves addition of park and trail to Regional Park and Trail master Plan. SCLP receives a Neighborhood Environmental Award Minneapolis City Council amends land use plan to "park and open space" Citizens spearhead efforts at MN Legislature to raise awareness and public funds Minneapolis Star Tribune endorses creation of Cedar Lake Park and Trail Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis pledges entire sanctuary fund, \$15,000 toward land purchase St. Louis Park High School group, "Save Our Surroundings" donates proceeds from Bowlathon Benefit Concert raises money for SCLP	MN Legislature approves the expenditure of \$1.1 million for acquiring the 28 acres James Ford Bell Foundation awards \$5,000 grant and interim, interest-free financing SCLP presents a check for \$473,700 in private funds to the MPRB for land acquisition Land purchased on November 25th! SCLP and MPRB form partnership to continue park and trail development Citizen Advisory Committee formed to work with Brauer and Associates to develop conceptual trail design Minneapolis Dept. of Public Works applies on behalf of the partnership for federal ISTEA funds for trail construction Hedberg Family Foundation pledges \$200,000 toward Cedar Lake Trail development Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority joins partnership and approves use of their land for trail MN Legislature, as recommended by LCMR, awards MPRB and SCLP \$610,000 for Cedar Lake Trail SCLP wins Minneapolis CUE (Committee on Urban Environment) Award First annual volunteer clean-up 17 eastern bluebirds hatched and fledged in park through Bluebird Recovery Program



Vision The restoration of the lands and waters now known as Cedar Lake Park began with an idea, a vision. Seldom is there an opportunity to reclaim a large tract of land in center of a major metropolitan area, create a nature preserve, and develop a major trail system. A small number of citizens, familiar with the land on the north and east side of Cedar Lake, saw the possibility of creating a nature park and a system of trails to connect the Chain of Lakes, the Mississippi River, neighborhoods, surrounding suburbs, and the historic and downtown business districts.



Enroll The vision was first shared with those people aware that the rail yards were being removed and the land was going to be sold on the open market. These people embraced the vision with enthusiasm and urged a wider sharing of this opportunity.

Communicate The vision, progress, action steps, and other information were shared widely with many people. Slide/video presentations, landscape renderings, and information packets were shared at neighborhood meetings and with other organizations concerned about environmental and park issues. The Association was formed, began regular publication of a newsletter, and

coordinated an organized effort to keep citizens, community and business leaders, public officials, and elected office holders informed.

Educate Good decision-making requires that all of the participants are well informed. Information was exchanged through formal and informal networks. Special education events were held, topics researched, and tours were conducted in the park. These efforts led to the formation of several Citizen Advisory Committees which advised both the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and Cedar Lake Park Association on the many issues and decisions concerning the park and trail.



Organize Enlivened by the shared vision, citizens organized as "Save Cedar Lake Park" (SCLP) to advance the idea of developing the old train yards into a nature park and connecting trail system. Now known as "Cedar Lake Park Association," the group soon established and began implementing the following goals:

- Share the vision widely
- Enroll supportive and enthusiastic people into the organization
- Invite all people to share their ideas, skills, time and talents to turn the idea into reality.

Hundreds of people stepped forward to contribute, and today, over 3000 households belong to the Association.

Shared Leadership and Consensus From the very beginning, all interested participants were invited to participate in the leadership of the organization through an open steering committee and through a consensus model of decision-making. These forms of power-sharing and participation continue today.



Civic Partnerships The Cedar Lake Park Association and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board formed a partnership to study the feasibility of creating Cedar Lake Park and Trail. This partnership then actively pursued funding for acquiring the land.

The Minneapolis Department of Public Works joined the MPRB and SCLP in seeking funds for Cedar Lake Trail. Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority and Burlington Northern Railroad joined the partnership in overseeing the design and construction of the trail. "Cellular One," now Air Touch Cellular, became an additional contributing partner by constructing the Linden Yard trail station just east of I-394. Ongoing partnerships such as these will be essential if the full vision for Cedar Lake Park and Trail is to be realized.

1993	1994	1995	1996
SCLP receives North Star State Bicycle Award CAC completes "Statement of Philosophy and Design Principles" Partnership conducts national search for design team, and select Jones & Jones, Richard Haag and Stragar-Roscoe-Fausch, Inc.	City of Mpls receives \$500,000 federal ISTEA funds for the first phase of Cedar Lake Trail Second annual clean-up Ospreys reintroduced Design team completes schematic trail design	Cellular One (now Air Touch Cellular) works with the partnership on the creation of Linden Yard Station Third annual clean-up Federal highway funds approved for completion of trail to Mississippi River Trail ground-breaking ceremony Presentation of Cedar Lake Trail to U.S. Secretary of Transportation Prairie re-contoured and seeded Trail Partnership received 1st Annual Environmental Award from Federal Highway Admin. in Washington D.C. Fourth annual clean-up	MPRB Teen Teamworks crew removes several tons of debris from north shore SCLP awarded \$10,000 DNR Conservation Partnership Grant to for native plant community restoration Completion of first trail construction phase Trail Opening ceremony on September 9th Fifth annual clean-up Kenwood-Isles Neighborhood Association allocates \$95,000 for planning and improvements near 21st and Upton Avenue Chain of Lakes comprehensive planning process begins Tree planting project by Cash on Plus and Twin Cities Tree Trust along northwest lakeshore Cedar Grove tree planting ceremony



Fundraising During the early 1990's and continuing today, limited financial resources created a real challenge for acquiring and adding a large piece of land to the park system. However, the importance of this land and its possibilities created the need for greater collaboration between the private and public sectors, without which there would likely not be a park or trail. To demonstrate its commitment, the Cedar Lake Park Association raised one third of the \$1.7 million required to purchase the land. The remaining two thirds was appropriated by the Minnesota Legislature in 1991. Additional private funds were also raised as matching grants for the federal and state trail funding. By 1996, nearly 1,300 individual citizens have made large and small financial contributions to Cedar Lake Park and Trail.



Volunteerism Active and ongoing citizen involvement continues to be the key to this project's success. From park clean-ups to creating the Concept Master Plan, volunteers have been the driving force behind the development of Cedar Lake Park and Trail. In one capacity or another, nearly 1000 people have worked directly on this project. An estimated 120,000 volunteer hours have been contributed by citizens and professionals over the last eight years.



100 Year Potentials

In 1897, few people could have imagined the tremendous changes that would occur to Cedar Lake, Brownie Lake, and the surrounding area over the next 100 years. Reflecting upon those changes and what has been learned, one can wonder what the next 100 years might be like. While the future cannot be predicted with any certainty, the potential of several key aspects will shape the future of Cedar Lake Park.

The Potential for Parks

One of America's great abiding traditions is the development of parks. Ranging from large national parks to small local parks, these special places are much more than just land and water, trees and wildlife, paths and structures. They are primary sites where people can strive to achieve an ideal state—where higher standards for individuals and the community are established and held. In concept and deed, parks are a state of mind through which our finest and highest aspirations can be achieved.

At the outset, the efforts to create and develop Cedar Lake Park were focused on the principle of "Nurturing Nature." While much environmental attention continues to be focused on remote wilderness areas untouched by human hands, citizens were moved to take an active role in restoring and protecting nature within the city. Here, it was reasoned, if people could repair and heal a portion of the lands and waters which had been altered and damaged by previous and current generations, a significant change could take place among a multitude of people. Thus, from the beginning, the process of environmental inquiry and associated activities has been community-based.

Through past efforts, a place has now been established where a harmonious balance between people and nature in a thriving, urban setting can be achieved.



The open, inclusive and thoughtful learning process used to guide consensus-based decisions must continue in future park development. Park-based learning, and funding and operating partnerships between citizens, corporations, civic institutions, and government this will inspire and create more socially, ecologically, and economically sustainable communities.

The Potential for Place

Over the next few decades a variety of native plant communities will be established throughout Cedar Lake Park. Expansive prairies, stately maple-basswood and oak forests, the transitional oak savanna and functional wetlands will once again be part of the city landscape. In some areas, this will require significant, immediately observable changes such as the removal of non-native and invasive vegetation, closing paths and eliminating human activities that adversely affect the natural environment. In other cases, the changes will be more subtle over many years. New seeds will sprout, old trees will die, and native tree plantings will eventually dominate existing woodlands. Natural resource management, based upon ecological principles, will be incorporated

into community-learning activities and can significantly reduce maintenance costs. Success will, in part, be measured on the level of plant and animal diversity flourishing in the park.

Within the current boundaries of the park, several landscape units found on the north and northeast side of Cedar Lake have been collectively called the "conservancy." This area includes the mound, the ridge and many plant communities which converge to create the most biological and topographical diversity within the park. It is here that the land and natural resource ethic will be given the highest priority. As a park center, people can experience tranquility and remoteness and yet look up and see the downtown Minneapolis skyline just a few miles away. In the short term, many of the initial development and restoration efforts such as the spiraling cedar grove will be focused in this area. Over time, shoreline improvements will be extended to enwrap both lakes including them as part of the conservancy.

Adjacent to the 'sanctuary-like' aspects of the conservancy, Upton Woods is likely to emphasize social gathering, harmonious recreational activities and, increasingly, environmental learning.



People will continue to seek the water's edge here. Yet, it is important to retain the relatively secluded character of this area by minimizing negative human impacts. Sanctioned activities would be concentrated in the beach and gateway areas by realigning the main trail, removing excess trails, strategically revegetating, and sensitively developing associated amenities.

Over the long term, it is envisioned that the park will extend from the tree-tops that line the bluffs to the north and east. Defined this way, Cedar Lake Park would visually transcend the boundaries with private property. These surrounding property owners would be invited to enter into voluntary covenants that complement the sustainable nature of the park and minimize negative impacts. Wildlife, vegetation and other management practices

will be coordinated with residents and other adjacent property owners such as Dayton-Hudson, Burlington Northern Railroad, Jones-Harrison Residence, and others. In essence, property owners are within the park rather than next to it. The likelihood for greater stewardship and involvement in park-related activities is thus increased.

Within this context, the disposition of the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority land adjacent to the entire east side of the park is of major concern. This land includes the proposed Kenilworth Trail and facilitates trail connections to the Midtown Greenway, Lake of the Isles and nearby neighborhoods. The site of the former Minneapolis & St. Louis Railroad repair shops were located on this land should be studied for evidence of industrial pollution and mitigated as necessary.

This plan strongly urges that the entire property or, at a minimum, a linear trail corridor and open space buffer become an official part of Cedar Lake Park.

The Potential for Connections

Over time, the stewardship ethic established at Cedar Lake Park can be extended to other places in the region via an expanding network of linear parks. Like rhizomes stretching out from the mother plant, these linear parks will be born from the ongoing changes in transportation, industry, communication, and other land-use decisions. These new parks will reach their pitch of social significance, and consequently their political challenge, where they converge on the city center. Here they will truly come into their own as they bridge the divisions between people and nature,



between country and city. Human activities already attuned to nature and high quality design based upon ecological principles will be further integrated into institutions of learning, the arts, new business, and technological advancements to create more livable cities.

The most immediate task is to complete the extension of the Cedar Lake Trail to the Mississippi River. There have been numerous suggestions for encouraging public-private development of contiguous open spaces in the historic warehouse district, promotion of new commercial enterprises serving trail users,



and the creation of design features which would further enhance and interpret the historical character of the district. These ideas need to be brought forward in an open and creative public process that will ensure design excellence.

The development of the Bassett Creek and Kenilworth Trails as part of the City of Minneapolis' Five Year Bicycle Plan should be vigorously supported, as should the St. Louis Park trail connection west of Highway 100. Additional neighborhood trail linkages to these commuter trails should be encouraged to foster non-motorized transportation. Significant efforts to study, plan, and implement comprehensive improvements to the area surrounding the aged Cedar Lake Parkway bridge between Brownie and Cedar Lakes should be undertaken to facilitate safer and more pleasant pedestrian, bicycle, canoe, automobile, bus, and train usage.

One of the most inspiring connections calls for the creation of greenways and earthen "land bridge" to reconnect north and south Minneapolis near the city's

impound lot. While the land bridge would span the railroad at Bryn Mawr Meadows, the greenways would provide an ideal buffer between light industrial and residential sections and raise the property values within sections of the Near North neighborhood. In the process, an additional length of Bassett Creek would be "day lighted" and diverted into a new wetland flowing into Spring Lake.

The Potential of People

In parks, we expect a higher standard of civility and respect among park users than that which is experienced in the everyday world. By tradition, parks are *consensual* spaces. From baseball to biking, from birdwatching to picnicking, multi-cultural and inter-generational park users recreate in parks according to rules that establish a common basis for cooperation and consensus.

A very high priority on consensus-making has been placed in all aspects of planning because shared knowledge, beliefs, and values are the foundation for harmonious and sustainable com-

munities. Quality and excellence in Cedar Lake Park will depend on a continuity of vision that is held by the community and not solely by a governmental agency. With adequate opportunities for gathering information and discussing ideas, the majority of people do make sound, often profound, decisions. Without this community knowledge, trust and participation, parks (and cities) cannot reach their full potential.

Cedar Lake Park has traditionally been a remote and wild place where people have come to escape the trappings and constraints of everyday city life. They have come to experience freedom. Our goal is to preserve this tradition of personal freedom while influencing park visitors to practice respect, restraint, and responsibility. The combination of excellent design, effective communication, opportunities for learning and participation, as well as citizen and police enforcement, will all be necessary to ensure that this balance can be attained.

Environmental awareness, understanding, and stewardship will be the basis for community involvement at Cedar Lake Park. A rich "learning and doing" environment will be established through the coordination of three principal entities:

* A "Council of Stewards" will be formed by people who have contributed significantly to the park. This will include citizens, Park Board officials, ecologists, landscape architects and others who can act as trustees of the shared vision for Cedar Lake Park. This council will participate in ongoing information and learning activities and meet in the park at least twice a year.

* "Stewardship Volunteers" will work in cooperation with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Cedar Lake Park Steering Committee, and the Council of Stewards to integrate and implement the shared values that guide planning and operational activities.

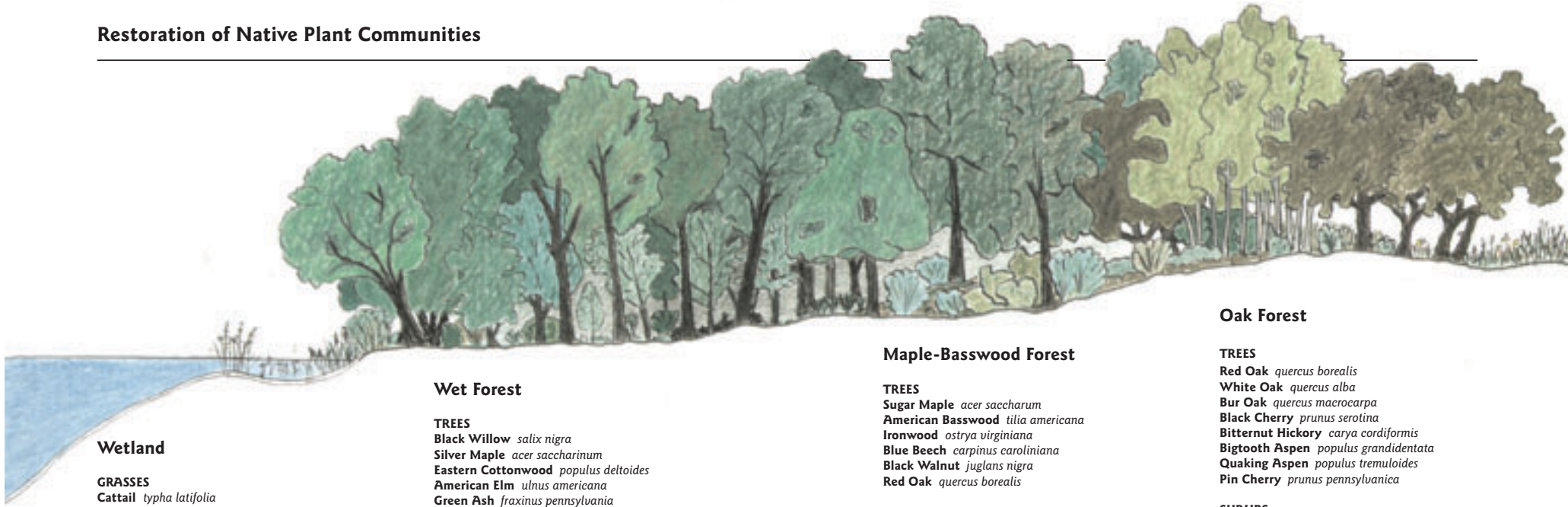
* The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board is legally and functionally responsible for park planning, operations, enforcement, and interpretation within the park. As such, MPRB staff are integral to the continued and future success of the park and community.

The Potential for Partnerships

The future years will be a challenging period of diminishing resources and escalating demands on local government and non-profit organizations. At the same time, cities of the future will be very different from present cities because they will face a new set of socio-economic, technological, environmental and global forces unlike those affecting cities today. These changes will affect the way that people live in their communities, after their physical form and function, and, most critically, influence how they are planned and (re)developed. Making wise choices will mean sharing resources and reducing waste. It means harmoniously integrating people, knowledge, and resources for the common and greatest good.

The success of land acquisition efforts and subsequent development strategy for Cedar Lake Park is attributable in great measure to the spirit of partnership, trust, and working relationships between citizens, businesses, governmental jurisdictions, and private and public institutions. Central to this partnership has been the unprecedented collaboration between Cedar Lake Park Association and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. The many awards received to date attest, in small part, to the value of this partnership model. More importantly, a vibrant partnership must continue in order to meet the future challenges facing the City of Minneapolis, its park system, and Cedar Lake Park.

Restoration of Native Plant Communities



Wetland

GRASSES

Cattail *typha latifolia*
Giant Bur-reed *sparganium eurycarpum*
Hardstem Bulrush *scirpus acutus*
Needle Spike-rush *eleocharis acicularis*
Reed Grass *phragmites australis*
Wool Grass *scirpus cyperinus*

FORBS

Sweet Flag *acorus calamus*
Bladderwort *utricularia vulgaris*
Marsh Marigold *althra palustris*
Yellow Water Lily *nuphar variegatum*
Water Plantain *alisma plantago-aquatica*
Duck Potato *sagittaria latifolia*
Wild Iris *iris versicolor*
Jewelweed *impatiens capensis*

Wet Forest

TREES

Black Willow *salix nigra*
Silver Maple *acer saccharinum*
Eastern Cottonwood *populus deltoides*
American Elm *ulmus americana*
Green Ash *fraxinus pennsylvanica*
Hackberry *celtis occidentalis*

SHRUBS/VINES

Speckled Alder *alnus incana*
Red Alder *alnus rugosa*
Red-osier Dogwood *cornus sericea*
Common Elderberry *sambucus pubens*
Highbush Cranberry *viburnum trilobum*
Buttonbush *cephalanthus occidentalis*
Virginia Creeper *parthenocissus quinquefolia*
Wild Grape *vitis riparia*

FORBS

Horsetails *equisetum* sp.
Wood Nettle *urtica* sp.
Cardinal Flower *lobelia cardinalis*
Virginia Waterleaf *hydrophyllum virginianum*
Jewelweed *impatiens capensis*
Sensitive Fern *onoclea sensibilis*

Maple-Basswood Forest

TREES

Sugar Maple *acer saccharum*
American Basswood *tilia americana*
Ironwood *ostrya virginiana*
Blue Beech *carpinus caroliniana*
Black Walnut *juglans nigra*
Red Oak *quercus borealis*

SHRUBS/VINES

Common Elderberry *sambucus pubens*
Prickly Gooseberry *ribes cynosbati*

FERNS/FORBS

Maidenhair Fern *adiantum pedatum*
Ostrich Fern *matteuccia struthiopteris*
Jack-in-the Pulpit *arisama triphylum*
Dutchman's Breeches *dicentra cucullaria*
Wild Ginger *asarum canadensis*
Hepatica *hepatica americana*
Wild Geranium *geranium maculatum*
Bloodroot *sanguinaria canadensis*
Lady Fern *athryium felix-femina*
Interrupted Fern *osmunda claytoniana*
Showy Trillium *trillium grandiflora*
Spring Beauty *claytonia virginica*
Canada May Flower *anemone canadensis*
White Trout Lily *erythronium albidum*
Virginia Bluebells *mertensia virginica*
Solomon's Seal *polygonatum biflorum*

Oak Forest

TREES

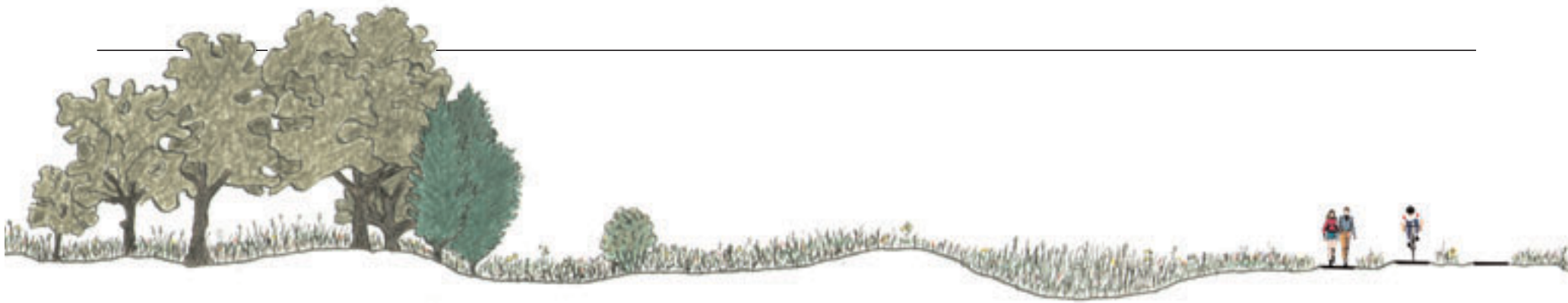
Red Oak *quercus borealis*
White Oak *quercus alba*
Bur Oak *quercus macrocarpa*
Black Cherry *prunus serotina*
Bitternut Hickory *carya cordiformis*
Bigtooth Aspen *populus grandidentata*
Quaking Aspen *populus tremuloides*
Pin Cherry *prunus pennsylvanica*

SHRUBS

Juneberry *amelancier laevis*
Chokecherry *prunus virginiana*
Wild Plum *prunus americana*
American Hazel *corylus americana*
Beaked Hazel *corylus cornuta*
Gray Dogwood *cornus racemosa*
Raspberry *rubus* sp.
Smooth Sumac *rhus glabra*

FORBS

Virginia Strawberry *fragaria virginiana*
Wild Geranium *geranium maculatum*



Oak Savanna

TREES

Bur Oak *quercus macrocarpa*
Red Cedar *juniperus virginiana*

SHRUBS

Chokecherry *prunus virginiana*
Gray Dogwood *cornus foemina*
American Hazelnut *corylus americana*
Leadplant *amorpha canescens*

GRASSES

Switch Grass *panicum virgatum*
Side Oats Grama *bouteloua curtipendula*
Little Bluestem *andropogon scoparius*
Blue Grama *bouteloua gracilis*
June Grass *koeleria macrantha*
Canada Wild Rye *elymus canadensis*

FORBS

Butterfly Milkweed *asclepias tuberosa*
Yarrow *achillea millefolium*
Prairie Onion *allium stellatum*
Purple Prairie Clover *dalea purpurea*
Dotted Blazingstar *liatris punctata*
Prairie Phlox *phlox pillosa*
Stiff Goldenrod *solidago rigida*
Common Oxeye *heliopsis helianthoides*
Fragrant Hyssop *agastache foeniculum*
Azure Aster *aster oolentangiensis*
Stiff Tickseed *coreopsis palmata*
Golden Aster *heterotheca villosa*
Wild Bergamot *monarda fistulosa*
Hoary Vervain *verbena stricta*

Prairie

GRASSES

Little Bluestem *andropogon scoparius*
Prairie Dropseed *spirobolus heterolepis*
Sideoats Grama *bouteloua curtipendula*
Kalm's Brome *bromus kalmi*
Big Bluestem *andropogon gerardii*
Prairie Cordgrass *spartina pectinata*
Bluejoint Grass *calamagrostis canadensis*
Great Bulrush *scirpus validus*
Pennsylvania Sedge *carex pennsylvania*
June Grass *koeleria cristata*
Needle Grass *stipa spartea*
Blue Grama *bouteloua gracilis*

FORBS

White Prairie Clover *dalea candidum*
Prairie Larkspur *delphinium virescens*
Lupine *lupinus perenis*
Black-eyed Susan *rudbeckia hirta*
Showy Goldenrod *solidago speciosa*
Rough Blazingstar *liatris aspera*
Bush Clover *lespedeza capitata*
New England Aster *aster novae-angliae*
Joe-pye-Weed *eupatorium maculatum*
Bottle Gentian *gentiana flavida*
Prairie Dock *silphium terebinthinaceum*
Cup Plant *silphium perfoliatum*
Culver's Root *veronicastrum virginicum*
Swamp Milkweed *asclepias incarnata*
Prairie Smoke *geum triflorum*
Stiff Sunflower *helianthus rigidus*
Slender Penstemon *penstemon gracilis*
Gray Coneflower *ratibida pinnata*
Prairie Phlox *phlox pilosa*
Zig zag Goldenrod *solidago flexicaulis*
Wild Bergamot *monarda fistulosa*

Design Approach

It is critical that the process used to create both small and large scale park improvement projects continues to follow the principles used in establishing Cedar Lake Park.

1. Identify and convene stakeholders, or their representatives, in meetings that are open to, and respectful of, all people of goodwill who wish to attend and participate in the planning and implementation process.
2. Review current information on the nature and location of the proposed improvements, soil and water conditions, and plant and animal communities that may be affected, as well as human uses and activities.
3. Identify, gather and review additional information and ideas needed prior to selecting/ hiring prospective consultants, preparation of design plans, or purchasing services or materials.
4. Develop consensus on the appropriate course of action and authorize designated leadership to act in a manner consistent with this consensus.
5. Communicate the proposal, background, consensus, actions and subsequent progress to all partners and participants including neighbors, donors, park users, governmental bodies, and other civic entities.

As any park project moves from concept, through schematic design and detailed construction or planting documents to implementation and completion, it is critical that the following guidelines be used:

1. The *Statement of Philosophy and Design Principles*, developed by the Citizen Advisory Committee, will be used to design each part of the park as well as for the park as a whole.
2. Issues involving smaller portions of the park need to be addressed in the context of the entire park.
3. Each project will be based on preserving and improving the soils, water quality, and the overall ecological integrity of the project site.
4. Native plant communities should be chosen on the basis of existing vegetation and the appropriate ecological conditions found in each part of the park.
5. If there is a choice between different plant species, priority should be given to those species which are attractive to wildlife.
6. Human activities and park improvements should foster positive personal experiences as well as promote harmonious interaction between people and the natural environment.

Full text of the 1993 Citizens' Advisory Committee's Statement Of Philosophy & Design Principles

Philosophy

As people of the earth, we are part of an interdependent community of air, soil, water, plants and animals. For life, we depend on clean air, drinkable water, nutritious food, healing remedies, protective clothing and adequate shelter. To enrich our lives, we need to experience nature's breadth and beauty, power and poetry, mystery and majesty.

We must respect, protect and nurture nature in all its diversity. Failure to do so, directly and indirectly leads to the degradation of our life support system, threatening life's quality and our very survival.

With more stress being imposed upon natural ecosystems by increasing urbanization and short-sighted planning, our future will depend on redeveloping cities which function more harmoniously with nature. Towards that end, it is vitally important to preserve and expand natural areas within existing cities where citizens can directly experience nature and its rhythms and cycles.

Through personal encounters with nature and reflective learning, we increase our appreciation of nature's ways and humanity's role in the web of life. These experiences refresh our spirits, strengthen our bond with all living beings, and remind us of the impact of our individual and collective decisions. Aware of nature's gifts, we need to ever renew our commitment to nurture nature locally and work for a sustainable, global community.

Opportunity

Seldom is there an opportunity to reclaim a large tract of land in the center of a major metropolitan area, create a nature preserve and develop a compatible trail system for non-motorized transportation. When the opportunity occurs, it must be seized and made a reality.

To meet such a challenge, it is vital for individuals, business, government, institutions and organizations to work together at unprecedented levels of service, commitment and cooperation. When these partnerships unite in efforts to improve the quality of life and the liveability of our communities, we see the world as it can truly be.

Cedar Lake Park with its connecting trails is a unique opportunity to transform our urban landscape and the way a city functions. To create a nature park with a variety of ecological communities and trails in the heart of the city provides real hope for a new vision for the future. With a significant land base now secured, the challenge of Cedar Lake Park and Trails must be met through a sensitive and creative design.

Partnership

Strong, independent citizen action, carried out in concert with the Park Board, has made Cedar Lake Park and connecting trails possible. The continuation of this broad-based, independent citizen involvement in the design, development and governance of the park and trails is essential if Cedar Lake Park is to realize its full potential. Continuing to build on past cooperative efforts, this new level of partnership — marked by shared decision-making by citizens, the Park Board and other public agencies — will assure the realization and future preservation of the vision/purpose of the park and trails.

Purpose

Our purpose is to establish and manage a harmonious community of soil, water, plants, wildlife, and people while providing access for people to experience the park and to travel by trail throughout the region by non-polluting forms of transportation.

Timetable

Although the existing land surrounding Cedar Lake and the newly acquired tracts appear wild and natural, nearly every portion has been significantly disturbed over the last century. Left to purely natural processes, this land cannot regain its full potential. While the beginning stages of restoration will require more active and noticeable management, natural processes will be the primary element of change throughout this long-term plan. We envision that the development of this sanctuary will continue well into the next century and be sustained thereafter.

Objectives

To realize the promise and challenge of creating and sustaining a nature conservancy and connecting trail system in the center of an urban area, objectives must be clearly stated. As the Citizens' Advisory Committee, we submit the following objectives for Cedar Lake Park and Trails:

- * **PROTECT** and improve the water resources and soils.
- * **RECONSTITUTE** a variety of native plant communities which reflect lake, wetland, prairie, savannah, woodland and forest ecosystems.
- * **MANAGE** the plant and animal communities for their long-term integrity, stability and beauty.
- * **CONNECT** ecosystems, green corridors, and trail systems.

- * **MINIMIZE** human artifacts and amenities within the conservancy area.
- * **INTEGRATE** the surrounding land and land uses to complement and enhance the park.
- * **FACILITATE** experiences in which people learn about nature and gain greater appreciation for humanity's role in the web of life.
- * **CELEBRATE** people living in harmony with nature and each other.

Design Principles

Through the process of identifying, discussing and refining all of the considerations for the park and trail, a series of design principles have evolved. Organized within the framework of the aforementioned objectives, these principles have been developed to guide, not dictate, the specific design of the park and ensure ongoing citizen involvement in the use and development of the park and trail. As the Citizens Advisory Committee, we submit the following as the design principles for Cedar Lake Park and Trail:

PROTECT and improve the water resource and soils.

- * Alter the existing topography and soils in those areas where modifications will reduce/eliminate erosion and improve the soil conditions necessary for establishing native plant communities or to otherwise create/improve park amenities.
- * Consider features with historical or cultural significance as park amenities to be incorporated into the overall design.

- * Improve the quality of water entering Cedar Lake by increasing the vegetative buffer along the shoreline (except for currently established beaches), by minimizing impervious surfaces where direct runoff into the lake is likely to occur, and by other appropriate methods.

RECONSTITUTE a variety of native plant communities which reflect lake, wetland, prairie, savannah, woodland and forest ecosystems.

- * Convert and maintain the large open expanse to the north and northeast of Cedar Lake primarily as Oak Savannah (native prairie grasses, flowers and scattered oak trees).
- * Manage the upland areas currently containing mature oak trees primarily as Oak Woodlands with prairie openings.
- * Convert and maintain the remaining forested areas and other areas not suitable for savannah or prairie to Maple Basswood Forest with other native tree and shrub species scattered among this community.
- * Enhance and expand the wetland communities along the lakeshore particularly in those locations where storm water runoff is most likely to occur.
- * Reestablish/establish additional wetlands (ephemeral ponds, wet meadows, marshes and/or streams), based upon historic evidence and the suitability of the topography and soils to the extent possible.
- * Plant Red Cedar trees as individuals or in small groupings in the drier portions of the park and along the commuter trail corridor(s).
- * Plant White Cedar and Tamarack trees near the lakeshore.

MANAGE the plant and animal communities for their long term integrity, stability and beauty.

- * Emphasize natural succession in implementing the transition from undesired to desired vegetative species.
- * Utilize integrated pest management principles and minimal chemical use to control disease and exotic species, reconstitute native plant communities, or otherwise maintain the desired plant and animal communities.
- * Maximize habitat edges to encourage wildlife diversity.
- * Retain a significant number of dead trees unless they are endangering visitor safety, park facilities or harboring harmful insects and/or disease.
- * Conduct authorized burning for land management objectives.
- * Increase selected wildlife populations by providing songbird feeding stations and artificial nesting structures.
- * Consider a transitional area on marginal sites within the park/trail corridor for an unleashed dog exercise area. Established ordinances as they pertain to dogs and other domestic animals will be enforced in other areas.
- * Use low-impact, non-motorized maintenance practices to the extent possible.

CONNECT ecosystems, green corridors and trail systems.

- * Link all types of trails in and through the park to provide a variety of compatible experiences and uses for both park visitors and commuter trail users.

- * Extend green (wildlife) corridors and non-motorized trails from Cedar Lake Park and Trails to connect non-contiguous parks and natural areas.

MINIMIZE human artifacts and amenities in the conservancy area.

- * Restrict buildings (including restrooms and information kiosks) to designated entrances and/or along the outside perimeter of the conservancy with sensitivity to neighborhood concerns.
- * Consider the use of vegetation or materials which appear natural as barriers to reduce noise and light from entering the conservancy area.
- * Restrict artificial lighting to designated park entrances and along the commuter bike trail at the lowest level possible without compromising a high level of commuter trail usage.
- * Locate the most conspicuous signage, in a style reflective of this park, at the designated entrances and/or along the park perimeter.
- * Design interpretive signage for the interior of the park to be unobtrusive and long lasting.
- * Provide trail location markers and means for emergency communication.
- * Develop rest areas and points of interest which are reflective of the park, sensitive to the topography and constructed primarily of natural materials.
- * Encourage the use of natural materials, including vegetation, for any required barriers with special consideration for wildlife movement and the necessary duration for such barriers.
- * Provide solid waste and recycling containers at designated entrances, heavily used sites and along the commuter trail corridor(s).

- * Restrict the use of motorized vehicles (except wheelchairs) from the interior of the park except for emergency purposes and/or required maintenance activities.
- * Remove human artifacts which are not considered park amenities.

INTEGRATE the surrounding land and land uses to complement and enhance the park.

- * Maintain and/or improve existing sites and create new sites which provide significant vistas within the park or of the surrounding area (including the downtown skyline) with sensitivity to neighborhood considerations.
- * Create transition experiences for the designated park entrances and selected neighborhood access points.
- * Disperse designated entrances along the main transportation routes.
- * Emphasize public transportation and non-motorized vehicles as the primary means for accessing the park with small, dispersed parking areas located adjacent to or near the park.
- * Locate commuter bike trails and associated amenities along the park perimeter and encourage these trail users to visit and experience the park interior on foot.
- * Develop and implement a "best management plan" for the watersheds contributing surface water to Cedar Lake.
- * Extend the reconstitution of native plant communities to lands adjacent to the park and trail corridor including existing park land, railroad right-of-way and willing private property owners.
- * Develop protocol for identifying and evaluating potential acquisition parcels.

- * Develop cooperative agreements for existing and future adjacent land owners which includes such things as land trusts and covenants.

FACILITATE experiences in which people learn about nature and gain greater appreciation for humanity's role in the web of life.

- * Provide a variety of interpretive experiences and materials focusing on the natural resources, history, and current and future management plans for the park.
- * Establish an interior pedestrian-oriented trail system which:
 - respects topographical features, plant communities and designated wildlife preserves.
 - provides access to the most important features of the park by balancing visual interest, the sense of solitude and the need for safety.
 - provides representative park experiences and highlighted features for physically disabled visitors.
 - provides limited access by motorized emergency and maintenance vehicles.
 - facilitates both hiking and cross country skiing.

- * excludes bicycles and in-line skates and seriously consider the temporary exception of mountain bikes on the hilly, highly filled area on the east side of Cedar Lake and limited access to that site until an area can be developed for mountain biking in some other location.

- * Encourage Park Police to be on foot on other non-motorized means while providing protection, law enforcement and interpretive opportunities for park and trail visitors.

CELEBRATE people living in harmony with nature and each other.

- * Create, use and make available graphics of the park and trails which symbolized a harmonious relationship between people and nature.
- * Create opportunities for people of all ages, backgrounds and cultures to actively participate in educational programs, management activities and other related service projects.
- * Plan a variety of events which bring people together in and on behalf of the park and the trail.
- * Encourage Park Police to be on foot or other non-motorized means while providing protection, law enforcement and interpretive opportunities for park and trail visitors.



Laurie Lundy, Carol White, and Martin Richmond were among the thirty-five citizens who signed the Statement of Philosophy and Design Principles document on March 1, 1993.

Activities Evaluation

Activities	Description	Potential Benefits	Potential Negative Impacts	Appropriate Locations	Recommendations
Biology experiments/demonstrations	Classroom visits to outdoor laboratory. Taking of samples for field or in-class observation.		Groups could be disruptive to passive users and wildlife. Careless sample gathering could cause damage.	Places where group access to collection/demonstration point is possible without damage.	Careful control of group necessary. Forethought to gathering and disruption to peace and quiet.
Bird & wildlife observation	Passive observation of animals from viewing blinds, platforms or trails.		Aggressive pursuit could disrupt some species.	From trail accessible places.	Discourage off-trail pursuit to increase habitat value of continuous natural landscapes
Cross-country Skiing	Wintertime active sport with adequate snow cover using established trails or breaking new trails.		Can be disruptive of wildlife.	Limit to peripheral Landscapes and transition areas.	Limit to established higher level trails, discourage bushwhacking.
Digging and fort building	Childhood adventure play activity common to unprogrammed or vacant places. Use of found materials, excavation of pits and tunnels.		Disruptive of immediate surroundings, litter and unkempt appearance. Intrusion of a human element in landscape.	Point of activity is to explore and create in an unprogrammed, unsupervised location.	Hard to program, purposefully locate or exclude. Can be discouraged by removing materials and obliterating traces.
Dog training	Varied activities in woods, grassland and open water to train dog in retrieval, pointing, tracking and other hunting techniques. Usually conducted off-leash.		Disruption of birds and other wildlife. Off-trail traffic in conservancy. Urine and defecation. Off-leash dogs conflict with other passive users.	Large parks and park reserves where distributed training exercises can be absorbed without user conflicts and disruption of the resources.	User conflicts minimized at low traffic times of day (early AM) and possibly seasonally. Training limited to a designated area could localize wildlife disruption and include storm water wetland for processing waste.
Dog walking	On-leash exercising of pets within established trails.		Defecation and urination contributing to degradation of lake water quality, quality of human experience of place.	On established trails, possibly limited to higher level trails.	Requires establishing a user etiquette.
Fire building	Unprogrammed activity usually confined to an established defacto fire ring.		Damage from fire wood gathering, singeing of overhanging branches, displacement of wildlife, concentration of traffic resulting in erosion.	Designated facilities in areas developed for high level of use, in periphery or transition areas.	Provide fire fuel, fire extinguishing equipment scheduled cleanup, trash receptacles, supervision.
Fishing	Casting from shore or boat.		Littering, mechanical damage to vegetation and soil to accommodate accessories or create clearing at water's edge.	Dry shore areas without cat tail wetlands. Fishing structures such as docks to facilitate and concentrate use.	
Free running dogs	Off-leash dog exercise. Owner usually on existing trails, pet running free on trail and across landscape.		Chasing of birds and wildlife. Conflicts with other passive users. Urination and defecation contributing to degradation of water quality in lake.	Possibly within designated dog running area at periphery of conservancy where wetland available for processing surface water.	Minimize wildlife displacement, create user etiquette to limit user conflicts.
Hand carry boating	Human powered boats such as canoes, small sail boats and sail boards.		Mechanical damage to vegetation and soils along pathways, at water's edge.	Established armored launching areas and beaches.	Can be harmoniously accommodated at Hidden Beach.

Activities	Description	Potential Benefits	Potential Negative Impacts	Appropriate Locations	Recommendations
Hard surface trail biking	Linear use of an established facility. Speed and congestion not compatible with some passive pedestrian uses.		Once trails are established there are few impacts other than increased accessibility for users.	Established trails at periphery of core conservancy landscapes.	Can be harmonious if bike use is limited to periphery. Provides community visibility. Provide bike racks and signing to keep bike use off of footpaths.
Ice Skating	An active winter use of artificial rinks or lake surface.		Artificially filled rinks could create an active use inappropriate to some areas. Wood gathering, warming fires, trails to lake, etc. could cause damage to vegetation and soils.	Grouped with other active use areas (Hidden Beach and associated structures).	Provide warming facilities (shelter or fire place with fuel). Sanitary facilities.
Jogging	On-trail running for exercise.		Disruptive of slower trail users where trail congestion is a problem.	Established higher level trails, especially in more urban parts.	Limit to periphery and transition areas and highest level trails.
Mountain bicycling	Rough terrain cycling with hazards and challenges such as steep slopes (up & down), trees, rocks, etc. Speed and noise not harmonious with passive use of same terrain.		Creates new trails, mechanical damage to vegetation, soil compaction and erosion. Disrupts and displaces wildlife.	Dedicated areas which do not have sensitive plants or animals or other conflicting user groups or that are spacious enough to accommodate without displacement.	Could be harmonious in a restored area within the public works section of the Cedar Lake Trail corridor. Inadequate space available to accommodate all uses in Burnham Woods.
Organized sports	League, team and pickup sports with two or more people. Usually requires a play field of some sort.		Trampling of vegetation and disruption of wildlife. Displaces passive uses.	Urban parks and play fields.	Discourage within conservancy. Not an appropriate activity for conservancy.
Picnicking	Eating out of doors.		Littering, inappropriate foods and taming of wildlife. Defecation and urination by humans.	Established picnic places with or without tables at periphery or transition areas.	Provide trash receptacles scheduled maintenance. Limit to informal groups.
Radio control planes, boats, cars	Running of motorized remote controlled vehicles on land, water or air.		Noise disrupts wildlife and detracts from open space experience of other passive users.	Urban spaces and designated places where noise is less noticeable.	Not an appropriate activity for conservancy.
Roller Skating	Use of hard surface trails. Fast pace disrupts and conflicts with pedestrian traffic in congested areas.		Use limited to smooth, hard surfaces by wheel size.	Established trails intended for wheeled use.	
Swimming & sun bathing	Swimming, wading and lounging in the immediate environs of a beach.		Casual use of surrounding woods for changing, fire wood gathering, defecation and urination. Littering.	Established beaches such as Hidden Beach.	Should become a recognized beach with changing and sanitary facilities provided. Group with other complementary or time/season shifted uses.

Current Landscapes

The lands and waters comprising Cedar Lake Park have changed significantly over time and the park now encompasses many very diverse areas. Locations and park features are known by a variety of names while topography, ecological features and human activities vary greatly within the park. At the same time, these features and uses have created a wide set of issues and challenges.

To establish a common vocabulary for locations and features, as well as to highlight many current issues and opportunities, the park has been divided into various "landscape units." The names for each of these units are based on geographical, ecological, topographical or some other feature. Since these units have been developed primarily for planning purposes, the boundaries between each unit have not been rigidly defined. Each description includes general location, current issues, design ideas, and ecological restoration plans.

1 Cedar Prairie

This is the largest unit, extending along the Burlington Northern Railroad from the Brownie Lake channel to Interstate I-394 overpass bridge. Most of this area was reshaped and planted with a variety of prairie species in 1995. The southern edge is a mix of different woodlands, two old gravel roads, several informal foot paths, and the new Cedar Grove. The third major gateway is contemplated near I-394 for park visitors approaching the park from the east using the Cedar Lake Trail. Major design considerations include the intersection with the proposed Kenilworth Trail, the gateway with amenities, and plant community restoration.

2 Forest Ridge

This unit extends north from Upton Avenue between the North Cove, Cedar Prairie and the Kenilworth railroad tracks. The most prominent feature is a

large ridge with many mature oaks. This ridge resulted from the railroads lowering and leveling the surrounding land for the intersecting rail lines. Numerous hobo camps were located here during the mid 1900's. Developing a path system that connects existing trails and allows park users to experience and enjoy the ridge while improving the diversity of the forest communities are high priorities.

3 North Shore

This unit includes the area between Cedar Lake and the southern edge of Cedar Lake Trail from the Brownie Lake channel to the east side of the prominent mound. The existing grove of cottonwoods near the channel needs to be enhanced with greater native tree and shrub diversity which would help consolidate the informal trail network and eliminate the informal shoreline trail. A small, trail loop with shoreline access nodes and connections to the paved trail for people with disabilities could be easily accommodated in this area. Removal of large sections of old road pavement along the shore should be undertaken. The shoreline vegetation needs to be enhanced with native species, providing multiple views of the lake. The mound is a significant feature of the park and its restoration, access, and possible amenities deserve special attention.

4 North Cove

This unit contains an extensive emergent marsh and wooded shoreline. Here, a warren of eroded paths, often too close to the shoreline, is presently being used by both walkers and bicyclists. Realigning and eliminating sections of these trails and creating lake access nodes are needed. Wetland and forest plantings throughout this unit, as well as the removal of debris, would also be beneficial.

5 Upton Woods

Of all of the park areas, this unit from West 21st Street to the end of Upton Avenue receives the heaviest concentration of people pursuing a wide variety of recreational activities. It is the primary eastern entrance into the park and is the recommended location for one of three major gateways. The main attractions are the relatively secluded beach known as "hidden beach," and an expanding trail network for walking, biking, and exercising dogs through the dense woods. During the summer months, high levels of traffic, street parking, and late-night parties have adversely affected the neighborhood. Comprehensive planning, addressing these issues while creating social and ecological balance, must be undertaken. Toward that goal, the "Big Woods Project", a major forest and savanna restoration effort, west of Upton Avenue, will begin in 1997.

6 Burnham Woods

This unit extends from Cedar Lake to the Kenilworth Corridor between Burnham Road and West 21st Street. This tract includes a variety of landforms since it was a former landfill and dumping ground for road materials. With its varied topography and wooded condition, it has become a regional destination for mountain bikers. Increased usage has created more trails, erosion, injuries, and conflicts with hikers. An interim plan to limit the extent of mountain biking has been instituted until a comprehensive policy can be developed by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. Entrances from Burnham Road and from the Kenilworth corridor, internal circulation, types of harmonious recreational activities, and restoration of diverse plant communities are the main issues which need to be addressed.

7 Southeast Shore

This very narrow strip of parkland is adjacent to several private residences along both Cedar Lake and the channel to Lake of the Isles. In most areas, the land appears to be private rather than public. Boundaries need to be clearly established with different use provisions by the property owners. Wetland and shoreline plantings, to help designate actual parkland should still provide views of the lake and some access by the residents. Design changes to the channel will have to be considered quite soon due to its deteriorating condition. A pedestrian trail connection along the north side of the channel from the Kenilworth trail corridor to the existing lakeshore trail should be considered.

8 South Shore

This narrow unit extends on both sides of Cedar Lake Parkway from the Cedar Meadows stormwater outlet to the intersection with Burnham Road. The most prominent feature is south beach. Since there is a residential stormwater outlet near this beach, no nearby parking, and two other beaches exist on the lake, this beach could be closed and consolidated with the beach on Louise Point. Wetland plantings would help filter runoff and reduce shoreline erosion. Native tree and shrub plantings should facilitate numerous lake views.

9 Cedar Meadows

This unit is located between France Avenue and Cedar Lake Parkway. Recent improvements to this former turf field include the restored wetland, paved paths, two observation platforms, and interpretive signage. Additional native species plantings would enhance the site.

10 Western Coves

This section of western shoreline extends south from the north portion of Louise Point to the stormwater outlet from Cedar Meadows. Louise Point currently contains one of three swimming beaches on the lake, a small parking lot, large turf area, and canoe dock. Another small parking lot and fishing dock are located on the southern peninsula known as Finlander's Point. Native tree, shrub, and wetland plantings should be undertaken throughout this unit. A picnic and informal play area could be developed on a portion Louise Point with an interpretive kiosk to inform visitors about the park, water quality, etc...

11 Northwestern Shore

Extending from the Cedar Lake Parkway bridge south to Louise Point, this is one of the narrowest sections of the park. In fact, it is one of the few areas within the entire park system where the bike and pedestrian trails are combined. Due to the deteriorating condition of the parkway bridge, a comprehensive design of the area needs to be undertaken. Roadway width, grade, and alignment, traffic rerouting and trail connections should be considered. Property boundary issues west of Cedar Lake Parkway need to be resolved. An informal entrance to Cedar Lake Trail from the Parkway needs to be improved and identified with signage to eliminate the use of two eroded paths. A variety of native tree, shrub, and wetland plantings would protect the shoreline, but species and location should also be chosen to provide occasional views of the lake.

12 Brownie Lake

This unit includes all park land surrounding Brownie Lake north of the railroad. Extensive areas of buckthorn need to be eliminated in woodlands and native species of forest communities need to be planted. The turf area on the north side of the lake was converted to prairie in 1996. The large, concrete stormwater outlet on the north side of the lake is no longer functional and should be removed or covered with soil and then revegetated. The informal walking trail around the lake requires improvements, and a direct connection with Cedar Lake Trail is critical. Designated and improved shoreline access, fishing and canoe landing sites, wetland plantings, and purple looserife control would enhance this unit. Vegetation management on the adjacent Dayton-Hudson property could be integrated into the park's native plant communities.

13 Western Extension

This long narrow corridor extends from the Burlington Northern Railroad right-of-way on the south side of the active rail line to the top of the wooded bluff from Cedar Lake Parkway west to Highway 100. A major entrance to the Trail, located near Ewing Avenue, is near the site of one of three major gateways proposed for the park. Enhancing the current woodland vegetation by removing buckthorn and reintroducing native forest species in plantings that eliminate the linear pattern of the current woody vegetation is desired. Additional prairie and wetland restoration is also needed.



Park Access and Trails

Cedar Lake Park has emerged as a popular destination for a rapidly growing number of park users. Hikers, bicyclists, bird watchers, anglers, dog owners, swimmers, in-line skaters, canoeists, cross-country skiers, and many others enjoy the special features of the park. In order for the park to realize its full potential as a place to harmoniously balance human use with the natural environment, its design should be consistent with the principles described in the 1993 Citizen Advisory Committee's Statement of Philosophy. Activities and features not consistent with these principles should be redirected to other parts of the Minneapolis and regional park systems.

An important component of current and future planning is the development of a comprehensive access and internal park trail system. Because of the extensive wetlands to the west to the restricted access due to the railroads, the area now known as Cedar Lake Park had been relatively inaccessible. This is largely why the area around Cedar Lake uniquely differs from the other portions of the Chain of Lakes. However, with its growing popularity, attention must now be given to how people can visit and enjoy the park.

While a large number of park users typically arrive by automobile, very limited auto parking is available. Two small parking lots are located on the west side of Cedar Lake with nearby parking bays along Cedar Lake Parkway. Most cars are parked along neighborhood streets, particularly in the area around Upton Avenue and West 21st Street. Two city bus lines, one at Thomas Avenue on the east side of the park, and the other on Cedar Lake Parkway, stop within a half block of the park.

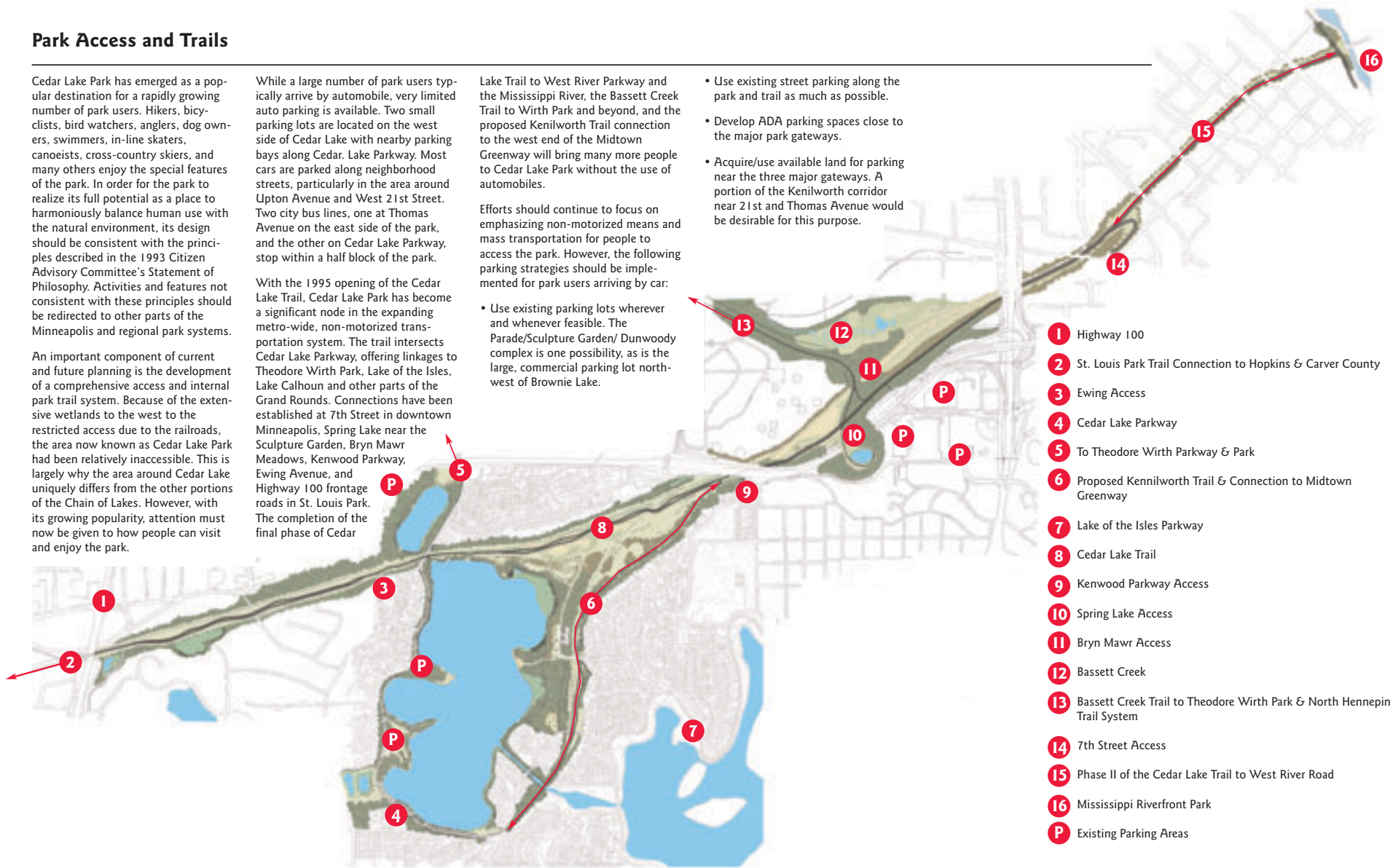
With the 1995 opening of the Cedar Lake Trail, Cedar Lake Park has become a significant node in the expanding metro-wide, non-motorized transportation system. The trail intersects Cedar Lake Parkway, offering linkages to Theodore Wirth Park, Lake of the Isles, Lake Calhoun and other parts of the Grand Rounds. Connections have been established at 7th Street in downtown Minneapolis, Spring Lake near the Sculpture Garden, Bryn Mawr Meadows, Kenwood Parkway, Ewing Avenue, and Highway 100 frontage roads in St. Louis Park. The completion of the final phase of Cedar

Lake Trail to West River Parkway and the Mississippi River, the Bassett Creek Trail to Wirth Park and beyond, and the proposed Kenilworth Trail connection to the west end of the Midtown Greenway will bring many more people to Cedar Lake Park without the use of automobiles.

Efforts should continue to focus on emphasizing non-motorized means and mass transportation for people to access the park. However, the following parking strategies should be implemented for park users arriving by car:

- Use existing parking lots wherever and whenever feasible. The Parade/Sculpture Garden/ Dunwoody complex is one possibility, as is the large, commercial parking lot northwest of Brownie Lake.

- Use existing street parking along the park and trail as much as possible.
- Develop ADA parking spaces close to the major park gateways.
- Acquire/use available land for parking near the three major gateways. A portion of the Kenilworth corridor near 21st and Thomas Avenue would be desirable for this purpose.



- 1 Highway 100
- 2 St. Louis Park Trail Connection to Hopkins & Carver County
- 3 Ewing Access
- 4 Cedar Lake Parkway
- 5 To Theodore Wirth Parkway & Park
- 6 Proposed Kennilworth Trail & Connection to Midtown Greenway
- 7 Lake of the Isles Parkway
- 8 Cedar Lake Trail
- 9 Kenwood Parkway Access
- 10 Spring Lake Access
- 11 Bryn Mawr Access
- 12 Bassett Creek
- 13 Bassett Creek Trail to Theodore Wirth Park & North Hennepin Trail System
- 14 7th Street Access
- 15 Phase II of the Cedar Lake Trail to West River Road
- 16 Mississippi Riverfront Park
- P Existing Parking Areas

Park Gateways

Park entrances or gateways should be designed to welcome, as well as inform, park visitors on a variety of levels. Maps with trail information including challenge levels, code of conduct, volunteer opportunities, interpretive programs and activities, etc. will be included for each gateway. Special features communicating universal themes and inspirational quotes, as well as commemorating the multitude of past and future contributors to the park, could also be included. Amenities such as restroom facilities, drinking fountains, benches, bicycle parking, and accommodations for people with disabilities should be carefully designed.

Three primary park gateways have been suggested:

The **Western Gateway** located between the Cedar Lake Parkway bridge and the Ewing Avenue access on the south side of the trail.

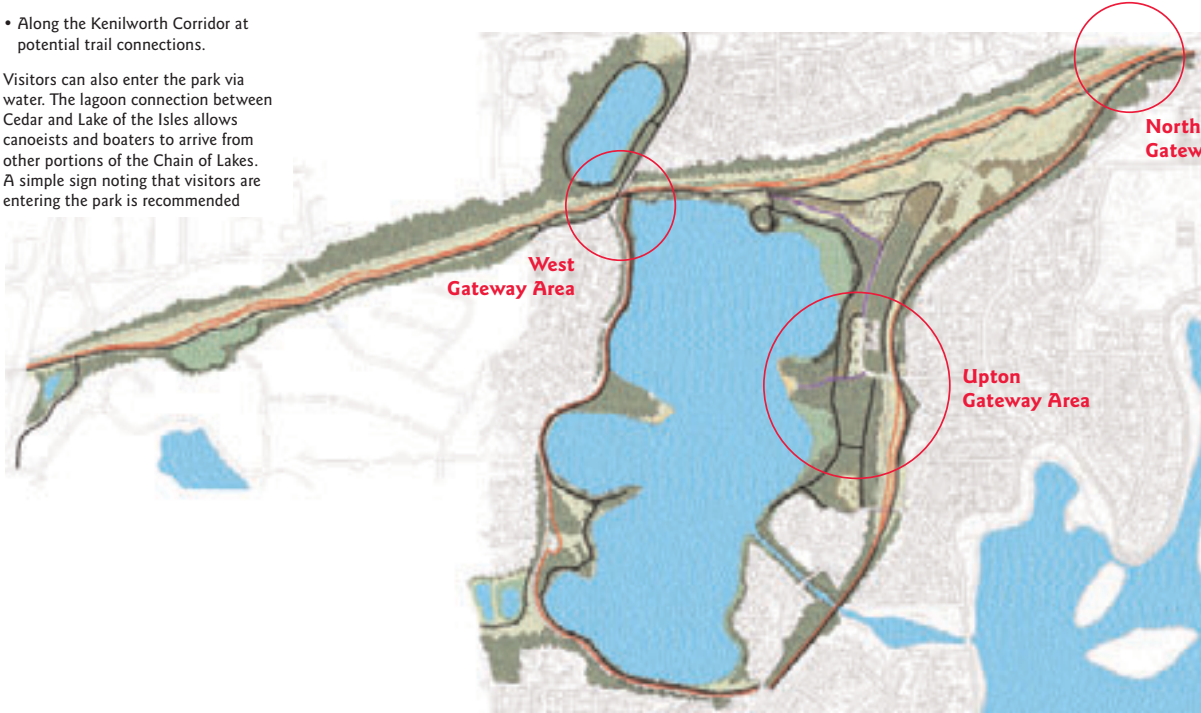
The **Northeastern Gateway** located west of I-394 where the Kenwood Parkway access and the proposed Kenilworth Trail would intersect Cedar Lake Trail.

The **Southeast Gateway** located near Upton Avenue South and West 21st Street where the majority of park users currently enter the park.

Secondary entrances, with minimal signage and other amenities, are suggested for the following locations:

- The west end of Cedar Lake Trail
- The parking lot on Louise Point
- South end of the park at the west end of the Burnham Road Bridge
- The floating platform at Cedar Meadows
- Cedar Lake Parkway at the access path south of the Cedar Lake Parkway bridge
- Along the Kenilworth Corridor at potential trail connections.

Visitors can also enter the park via water. The lagoon connection between Cedar and Lake of the Isles allows canoeists and boaters to arrive from other portions of the Chain of Lakes. A simple sign noting that visitors are entering the park is recommended



Park Trails



The trails, as they now exist, are an expanding, unplanned maze of both old and new trails used by walkers, bicyclists, in-line skaters, cross-country skiers, dog walkers, and many species of wildlife. Over time, the park has become more fragmented with an increasing number of trail-related problems. Conflicts between hikers and bicyclists using the same paths have approached dangerous levels. There are significant erosion and ecological degradation problems primarily due to higher levels of mountain biking in the park. Currently, there is unrestricted access to sensitive natural areas such as the lakeshore and steep slopes.

A well designed, comprehensive trail system, guided by the CAC Statement of Philosophy, can be developed using the following principles:

- Protection of the lakeshore and other ecologically sensitive areas
- Development of non-motorized transportation corridors on the perimeter of the park
- Separation of pedestrians and bicyclists in most park areas
- Utilization of existing trails wherever possible

- Elimination of unnecessary trails
- Provision for both natural and hard-surface trails
- Utilization of spur trails and nodes to access special areas

The new Cedar Lake Trail and the proposed Kenilworth Trail along the east side of the park will serve both non-motorized transportation and recreation needs. The paved trails along the south and west side of Cedar Lake were designed primarily for recreational uses. Due to width limitations, a section of this trail near the Cedar Lake Parkway bridge combines pedestrians and bicyclists on the same eight foot wide path. Reducing automobile traffic to north-bound only between Franklin Avenue and Cedar Lake Road and diverting southbound traffic down France Avenue would provide enough space on the parkway to add a separate walking and bicycling paths.

Additional hard-surface trails accommodating people with disabilities are needed for the gateway facilities, an access trail to the Cedar Lake Trail off of Cedar Lake Parkway south of the railroad bridge and for a path in the grove of trees immediately east of the Brownie Lake channel bridge.



A multi-purpose trail would follow an existing gravel road between the north end of Upton Avenue and Cedar Lake Trail near the prominent mound on the north shore of the lake. This trail would be designated for bicyclists, and service/emergency vehicles. The current path to “hidden beach” from West 21st Street and Upton Avenue would accommodate pedestrians and wheelchairs, as well as service/emergency vehicles. Bicycle use on this trail would be restricted beyond a designated bicycle parking area located near the gateway facilities.

The next level of trails would be designed for hikers and cross-country skiers. The major trail along Cedar Lake would utilize most of the existing trail between the north shore mound and the channel to Lake of the Isles. However, sections which are severely eroded or too close to the shoreline will be moved to minimize shoreline erosion and disturbance to entire sections of this important wildlife habitat. Instead, spur trails to shoreline nodes and viewing platforms will be developed for access to the lake or other special areas. The same concept would be used for Brownie Lake. Additional

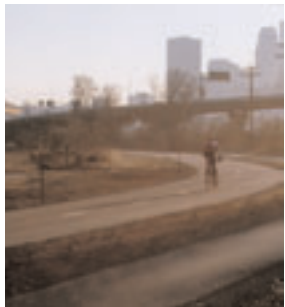
trails and linkages will be developed for the base and top of the mound, the interior of the prairie, Forest Ridge, Burnham Woods, and the Upton Woods using existing trails wherever feasible.

A below-grade trail connection between Cedar and Brownie Lakes is needed. This new trail would eliminate the dangerous practice of many people crossing the railroad tracks. This may best be accomplished by redesigning a more user-friendly channel accommodating boaters, hikers, and skiers. A similar pedestrian trail on the north side of the lagoon between Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles could create an important neighborhood connection to the park. Extraneous trails would be closed and replanted with appropriate vegetation.

The Burnham Woods, south of 21st and Upton, poses many challenges due to the popularity of mountain biking. The combination of hilly terrain and woods found here is particularly attractive to an increasing number of both casual and serious bikers. Unfortunately, this type of usage has resulted in a random, unrestrained array of paths and ruts causing conflicts with hikers, injuries to people, soil erosion and other environmental degradation.

Currently, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board does not have an official policy on mountain biking within the park system. However, the growing popularity of mountain and other “off-road” bicycles in Cedar Lake Park and elsewhere has created a pressing need for development and adoption of a comprehensive policy addressing this issue on a system-wide basis.

In the short term, the area in Burnham Woods most heavily used by mountain bikers must be altered and reduced to minimize injuries, user conflicts and environmental damage. Steps have already been undertaken to address this issue. New, more restrictive boundaries have

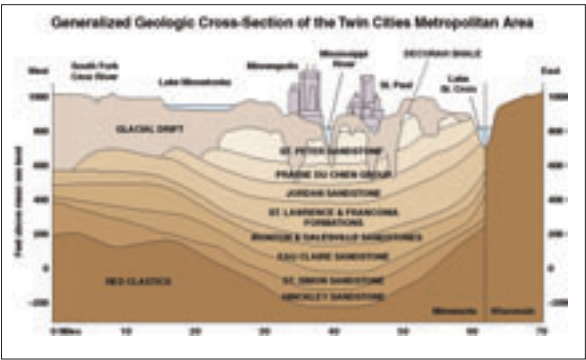


been established through the use of large logs, minor earth work, and signage. The most dangerous jumps have been eliminated. Access to and from the area has been redirected to the Kenilworth corridor. Education and increased enforcement of a recently amended bicycle ordinance have begun. Efforts are being made to involve mountain bikers in limited maintenance activities as well as enforcing a code of conduct among users.

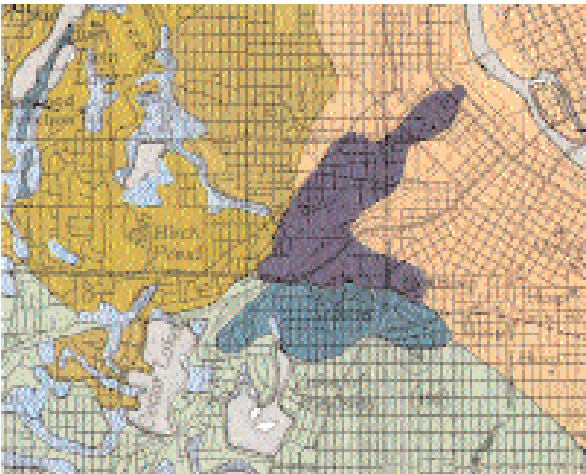
Although continuation of mountain biking at its current location and level can be accommodated in the short term, the inherent problems associated with this recreational activity require a different long term solution. Given the size and purpose of Cedar Lake Park, mountain biking is not compatible. However, recognizing the legitimacy of this recreational activity, it is recommended that a designated mountain biking area be developed as part of the city or regional park system. Physical components of such an area would include varied topography, natural appearance, carefully designed trail system, different challenge levels, and appropriate amenities. A responsible user ethic would be a key requirement for this area and could be facilitated through a club or special use permit.

History of the Lands and Waters

The lands and waters comprising the area we now call Minneapolis have changed dramatically from ancient times when a succession of oceans covered this portion of North America. These marine environments sorted and deposited different geologic materials, eventually forming the limestone, shale and sandstone layers underlying our entire region. Except for the Mississippi River gorge where these sedimentary rocks are exposed, there is little evidence of these events in our current landscape.



The relatively flat landforms created by the oceans were, in turn, repeatedly changed by massive ice sheets which advanced and retreated from this region over thousands of years. As these glaciers moved southward, they scraped tremendous amounts of sand, gravel, and rocks from northern areas and carried these materials along. When the climate warmed and the glaciers began to melt, the materials once imbedded in the ice were left behind. In some cases, hills and ridges were formed. In others areas, meltwater eroded the existing landscape and formed broad, flat outwash plains downstream. With each successive glacial advance and retreat, hills would be leveled, valleys filled in, and new surface features created.

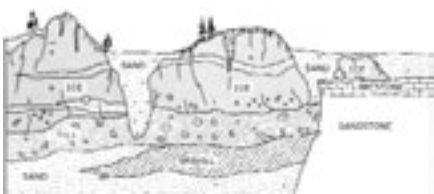


Soil Types

- Peat and organic sediments from former lakes and wetlands
- Sand, loam, and organic layers from former lake
- Sand and gravel from outwash overlain by wind-blown loess
- Sand, loam, and gravel from former river terrace
- Layers of sand, loam, gravel, cobbles, and boulders from glacial deposits
- Unsorted sands and loam with layers of gravel

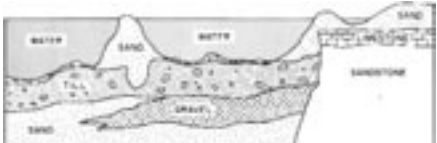


Although it is difficult to imagine, Cedar Lake and the other lakes which we call the Chain of Lakes actually lie 150 to 250 feet above a former river valley. This valley was formed by a relatively small river which flowed south as a tributary to the great River Warren. Eventually the river grew in size, changed course and carved the present Mississippi River gorge. The former valley then began filling up with glacial debris.



A. Last stages of glaciation (10,000 years ago)

As the last glaciers melted, broke up, and retreated, several large blocks of ice were left behind in this buried valley. Tremendous amounts of sand, gravel, and rocks were deposited over



B. Today

much of the region. This process was responsible for the creation of the "Devils Backbone," the former name for the area of hills and ridges found in the Lowry Hill, Kenwood and Bryn Mawr

neighborhoods. At the same time, the buried ice blocks slowly melted, forming steep-sided depressions or *kettles*. These basins are now occupied by the Chain of Lakes.

Human Impacts on the Lands and Waters

Pre-European Settlement

Although there is a long history of American Indians living throughout the region, there is no documentation of Cedar Lake being used by Native Americans. However, a foot trail leading to the southeast corner of Cedar Lake from Lake Calhoun had been established in the early 1800's so the lake was likely visited and used by the local inhabitants. The area east of the lake was well known as a major hunting area, but the abundance of surrounding wetlands, especially on the west side of the lake, may have made foot travel virtually impossible around most of the lake.



Cedar Lake Road

Before the advent of the railroads, the only means of travel in the region was by water or by foot. In 1852, a dam was constructed on Minnehaha Creek near where Minnetonka Mills was constructed, and steamboats were no longer able to travel up the creek to Lake Minnetonka. With the growing number of towns and farms to the west, an alternative route had to be developed to transport supplies to these settlers. Thus, Cedar Lake Road became the first road constructed to the west from Minneapolis. Stagecoaches carrying immigrants, mail, and supplies used the road three times a week until the late 1860's.



1839



1860



1886

A Succession of Early Maps

Some of the first changes to the area around Cedar Lake can be seen on a succession of early maps. The earliest map of the area (1823) did not show a lake where Cedar Lake is now found. The crude map (above) from 1839 does show a lake there with the name Lake Leavenworth (name of Fort Snelling's first commander). By 1860, the lake

had been renamed Cedar Lake, the surrounding land surveyed, and Cedar Lake Road had appeared. By 1886, a growing system of roads and rail lines for the rapidly expanding city had become a much more dominant landscape element.



The Railroads

The first railroad through the Cedar Lake area was built in 1867 by the St. Paul & Pacific Railroad. At that time, the north end of Cedar Lake actually extended to the base of the Bryn Mawr bluffs and there were extensive wetlands to the west. With these natural obstacles, railroad engineers decided to build the new line around the south end of the lake before heading back west to Lake Minnetonka. However, the StP&P went bankrupt in 1879, then emerged as the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railroad in 1883. Because of the flourishing resort business on Lake Minnetonka during this time, the new railroad decided to build the "Minnetonka Cut-off" across the north end of Cedar Lake. The railroad prospered under the leadership of James J Hill and became the Great Northern Railroad in 1890. In the 1950's the Great Northern merged with and became Burlington Northern, which still operates trains along this east/west corridor today.

Oak Grove Hotel

During the 1860's, Minnesota was known as a haven for people suffering from a variety of health problems. Notables such as W.W. Mayo, Supreme Court Justice Salmon Chase and Henry David Thoreau all visited the state for that reason. In 1870, the Reverend Ebenezer Scott and his wife Gertrude built a health resort known as the "Home" on the south shore of Cedar Lake to cash in on the boom. The main structure was an octagonal building with porches on all sides. Free rides from the train station via buggies or boats and the use of the stables were offered to guests. The venture failed, in part according to the reverend because of his refusal to serve alcohol on Sunday. The buildings were later sold to Judge Edwin Jones. His mother-in-law, Mrs. William Harrison who was an ardent supporter of the Women's Christian Association, left money in her will to convert the resort into a home for women. Thus, the Jones-Harrison Home began. Many years and many buildings later, the facility still thrives on the original site.

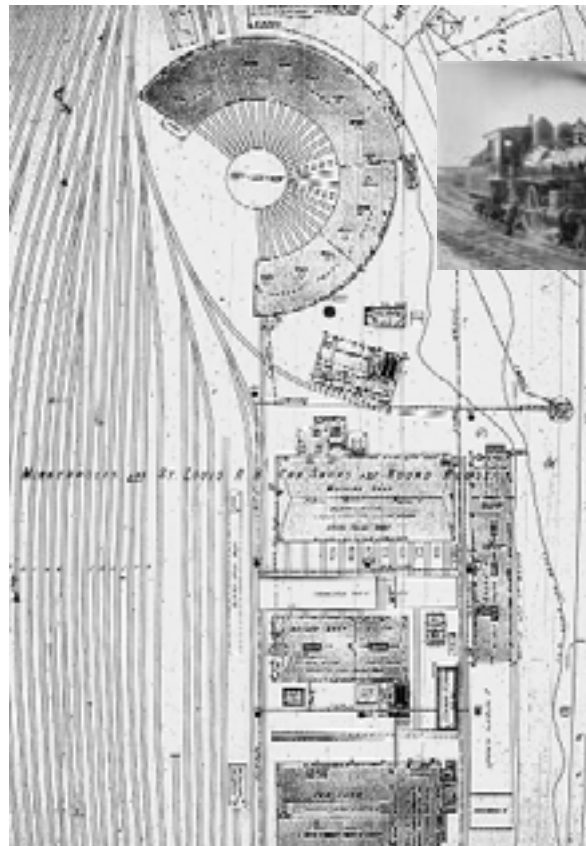


View of the old Burnham Road Bridge from the southeastern shore of Cedar Lake in the early 1900's.



Kenwood Station

Anticipating the growing needs for transportation to and from the Kenwood neighborhood, the Minneapolis and St. Louis Railroad constructed a passenger depot at the corner of West 21st Street and Thomas Avenue in the 1870's. Known as the Kenwood Station, the cupola-shaped structure was a busy place during the late 1800's. However, with the advent of the street cars, the number of passengers began to decline. The building was converted to a home near the turn of the century and remained a landmark until it was torn down in the 1970's.



The "Louie"

Frustrated by the high tariffs and highhandedness of the St. Paul and Pacific Railroad, several Minneapolis businessmen decided to build a competing railroad. In 1871, they began laying tracks parallel to the

St.P&P and competed for the lucrative resort business. This regional carrier was named the Minneapolis and St. Louis Railroad, or the "Louie," and would have a profound impact on Cedar Lake.

During the 1890's, the Minneapolis & St. Louis Railroad began constructing a huge complex of tracks, plus stone and brick buildings north and east of the lake on what is now the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority property. Hugging the base of the Kenwood bluffs, the shops repaired and maintained all of the railroad locomotives and cars until the company was taken over by the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad in the 1970's. The buildings were eventually abandoned and torn down in 1984. Rubble from the facility can still be found on the site.

Cedar and Brownie Lakes

Of the many lakes found in Minneapolis, the most well-known are the "Chain of Lakes": Harriet, Calhoun, Isles, Cedar, and Brownie. While each of these urban lakes have been altered over the last century, the physical changes to Cedar and Brownie are perhaps the most dramatic.

Many decisions and events have literally reshaped and linked these lakes together. In 1867, construction of the St. Paul and Pacific Railroad filled an open water bay and extensive marshlands along the eastern shore of Cedar Lake. In 1883, the same year that the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board was founded, the Great Northern Railroad sliced through the glacial ridge separating Cedar and Brownie to create a more direct east-west mainline route from Minneapolis. In the process, this project created a causeway through the northern tip of Cedar Lake and filled some of the surrounding marsh to the north.

In the meantime, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board was continuing to plan and expand the park system. In 1907, the Board acquired the first of several properties leading to the creation of what would become the largest park in the system, Glenwood Park. Later named Theodore Wirth Park after the influential superintendent who served from 1906 to 1934, this initial parcel included Brownie Lake. At this time, the Park Board also considered purchasing land around Cedar Lake to create a south entrance to this major new park. On April 6, 1908, the Board was able to purchase a narrow, 9.3-acre strip of land along the south and west shores of Cedar Lake for \$13,337.



Cedar Lake was named for the red cedar trees growing nearby, and has been a popular destination since the early years. This photograph was taken in 1870 by Mrs. Ulysses S. Grant. The picture was shot from the northwest shore and looks southeast toward Louise Island.



Louise Island during low water conditions during the 1890s.



View of the north shore of Cedar Lake and the Great Northern tracks as they looked in 1900. In the center is the original Cedar Lake Road bridge, which was replaced in 1916. The current parkway bridge was constructed in 1948 and is scheduled to be replaced by 2001.

Despite the changes to and around Cedar Lake during the city's rapid growth, the lake was still known for its clear, clean water. In fact, the Cedar Lake Ice Company was founded in 1878 to harvest and ship ice as far away as St. Louis. The main building, an icehouse, was built on the northeast shore of the lake adjacent to the railroad. Railcars containing produce were then moved next to the icehouse so the contents could be cooled for shipment. Operations ceased in 1918 when a spectacular fire destroyed the wooden structure.



Harvesting ice at Cedar Lake.



Men loading ice on the east side of Cedar Lake around 1900. The old Kenwood Station is to the left of the freight car.



View of the Cedar Lake icehouse on the lake's northeast shore in the early 1900's. The top of the original Burnham Road bridge can be seen over the first row of trees. The narrow point of land was the site of "Dingley's Boarhouse" and is where 'hidden beach' is now found.



Equipment used to dredge the Chain of Lakes.

As the proposed entrance to Glenwood Park, Cedar Lake Boulevard required more land than was actually purchased. On November 12, 1911 hydraulic dredging of the shallow parts of the lake to widen this land. The resulting spoils were also used to fill a portion of the marsh adjacent to the southwest portion of the lake, create more shoreline and beach areas, and build up the south approach for a new bridge over the rail lines at the northwest corner of the lake. By 1917, nearly 388,000 cubic yards of sand and gravel had been removed from the lake. On June 23, 1914, one of the dredges used for the project sank during a storm and was never recovered.

In 1910, the Park Board was developing plans to connect Cedar Lake to both Lake of the Isles and Brownie Lake as part of a larger Chain-of-Lakes project. The channel and lagoon between Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles were dredged and completed on October 17, 1913. This resulted in the water level of Cedar Lake dropping over six feet. The secondary effect of creating more shore land was also accomplished. The single island near the western shore known as Louise Island now formed the tip of the peninsula which is today called Cedar Point.

In 1921, the Park Board began exploring ways to make an above-grade connection over the rail lines between Dean Parkway and Cedar Lake Boulevard. At the same time, there was a desire to acquire enough shoreline along the north and east sides of the lake to place the entire lake within the public domain. The planned bridge was never funded, and it was not until 1954 that the Park Board had the funds to purchase an additional nine acres along the eastern shore. Those funds were generated through the controversial sale of 31.5 acres of parkland west of Brownie Lake to the Prudential



View in 1913 of the newly-completed channel from Cedar Lake to Lake of the Isles.

Insurance Company. The last remaining private shoreland on the north was acquired from the Great Northern Railroad in 1959. In the 1970s, several private residences west of Upton Avenue South and north of West 21st Street were purchased and razed. This completed land acquisitions for Cedar Lake Park until the 1991 purchase of 48 acres.

Once known as "Hillside Harbor" and then re-named for the daughter of an early landowner, Brownie Lake has experienced profound changes during the last 115 years. Construction of the "Minnetonka Cut-off" in 1883 by the Great Northern Railroad also cut off the southwestern arm of Brownie Lake. Without enough runoff to maintain the newly-separated eleven acres of open water, the area began drying up. Today, this former portion of the lake is known as Ewing Woods and Wetland.

The channel between Cedar and Brownie Lakes also had a major effect on both lakes. With its completion on September 4, 1917, water flowed out of Brownie Lake until the water depth dropped by nine feet and the surface area was reduced from 22 to 10 acres. The water depth of Brownie stabilized at its current depth of 55 feet. In 1938 the original 20-foot channel width was narrowed to seven feet when the wooden railroad was replaced by the current concrete box culvert.

Brownie Lake was also significantly affected by the progressive enlargement of an early east-west road. In 1872 Superior Avenue only extended as far west as the northern tip of the lake. However, by 1913 a bridge had been constructed over the lake and the avenue extended well to the west. With the fall of the water level in 1917, the bridge was no longer necessary and



E.W. "Ed" Dingley operated a fleet of pleasure boats on Cedar Lake beginning in 1892 and continuing until his death in 1942. His boathouse and a string of docks were located on the point of land where 'hidden beach' is now located. This photo from the late 1890s shows Dingley's house at 2044 Upton Avenue South.

the former lake basin was filled in to construct an improved roadway. The road was then widened and repaved in 1920 and renamed Wayzata Boulevard. Later this roadway was further upgraded to become Highway 12. By 1990, major construction on this section of highway was completed and the six-lane freeway, I-394, was opened.

With each successive road improvement project, Brownie Lake had become more and more separated from Theodore Wirth Park. The overall proximity – as well as the visual, physical, and ecological connections of Brownie Lake to Cedar Lake – create a persuasive rationale for including Brownie Lake and its surrounding parkland to the larger Cedar Lake Park.

While the physical changes to the lakes are hardly noticeable, today water quality has been significantly reduced. Prior to settlement 150 years ago, rain and snow would fall within each lake's vegetated watershed. Some of the water flowed into the lakes, while a significant amount entered the soil and groundwater aquifers. With Brownie's surface area reduced, the natural process of wind mixing the upper and lower "layers" of the lake no longer occurred. As a result, there has likely been no aquatic life in the bottom 30 feet of the lake for nearly 80 years.

Within most area lakes, water is stirred by the wind during the spring and fall. Known as “overturn,” this seasonal process distributes oxygen and nutrients from top to bottom. Although there is some evidence that the mixing of upper and lower “layers” of lake water was always limited in Brownie Lake, the progressive reduction of Brownie’s surface area lessened the mixing process. The combination of iron from the sediments and the addition of significant amounts of road salt from Highway 12 during the 1960’s and 1970’s reinforced this stratification. As a result, there is virtually no aquatic life in the lower half of the lake.

After the individual lakes were connected by channels to form the Chain of Lakes, it became important to manage and maintain the water levels for all of the lakes. In 1933, a pump was installed to bring groundwater into Brownie Lake to maintain water levels for the entire Chain of Lakes. As much as 850 million gallons of groundwater were used for this purpose until 1938, when pumping ceased. In 1955, the Prudential Insurance Company, located northwest of Brownie Lake, began discharging groundwater used for air conditioning into Brownie Lake at a rate of 50,000 gallons per day. This practice was discontinued in 1996. In 1957, a pump station and pipeline between Bassett Creek and Brownie Lake were constructed to use creek water to augment lake water levels during dry summers. This system was in place until 1965 when a pumping station was constructed on the Mississippi River to pump water into Bassett Creek when creek water was used to maintain lake levels. From 1966 to 1978, as much as 1 billion gallons of Mississippi River water was pumped into Bassett Creek for this purpose. The use of creek and river water to maintain the water level of the Chain of Lakes was discontinued in 1990.



Along with the many physical changes that have occurred to both lakes, water quality has also changed dramatically. Prior to pioneer settlement during the 1850’s, rain and snow fell within the vegetated area surrounding each separated lake. Some of this rainwater and much of the snowmelt flowed directly into each of the lakes. A significant amount also entered the sandy soils and eventually reached the groundwater. This filtered water provided the source for the springs and clear water for which Cedar Lake was long known.

As the city and surrounding suburbs continued to develop, significant changes occurred in the natural runoff and filtration systems. The volume and rate of runoff increased as more impervious surfaces such as roads and buildings increased within the drainage (watershed) area. A system of storm sewers were constructed to direct water away from developed areas to wetlands and lakes. Entire new areas were added to the watersheds. As a result, a wide variety of air-borne and other pollutants from multiple sources flowed into the

lakes. Known as non-point pollution, these contaminants are primarily responsible for the overall decline in lake water quality over the last 45 years. Recent scientific studies indicate that Cedar Lake has remained relatively stable since 1971. However, it is the most susceptible of the Chain of Lakes to the negative effects from runoff.

Of all of the materials entering the lakes, nutrients such as phosphorus and, to a lesser extent, nitrogen are of greatest concern. These materials are largely responsible for the aging process of the lakes. Although this eutrophication process is normal, it is accelerated when urban runoff contains greater amounts of the nutrients. Over the years, much of the phosphorus remains in the sediments and is “reintroduced” to the lake each spring compounding the problems.

To address these and other water quality issues for the entire Chain of Lakes, a multi-faceted and innovative program has been developed and implemented. Known as the “Clean Water



Partnership,” this initiative includes the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Cities of Minneapolis and St. Louis Park, Minnehaha Watershed District, and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and Pollution Control Agency. This project has undertaken a variety of initiatives including homeowner and business watershed education, installation of grit chambers, more frequent street sweeping, storm sewer reconstruction and wetland restoration.

This Concept Master Plan embraces these and other projects being implemented by the Partnership. In addition, revegetating the shoreline with native species around the entire perimeter of both lakes to reduce erosion and provide additional wildlife habitat, moving informal pathways away from the shoreline, and minimizing impervious surfaces in and around the park should be pursued. Ecologically-sound Eurasian milfoil and purple loosestrife monitoring and control practices should continue. Citizen education and involvement with these and other activities should be encouraged.



Wetlands

Wetlands include any plant community which develops along lakes and streams or where there is standing water and/or water-saturated soil. There are many types of wetlands including emergent marshes, sedge meadows, peat bogs, calcareous fens, hardwood swamps and shrub-carrs. A unique tamarack bog can still be visited a short distance away in Theodore Wirth Park.

Shallow and deep water marshes of varying acreage surrounded all or most of Cedar and Brownie Lakes at one time. However, due to the dredging, filling and changing water levels that occurred between the 1860's and 1950's, there are only limited marshes along the east shores of both Cedar and Brownie Lakes. Even these marshes have been reduced in size in recent times. The current beach on the east side of Cedar Lake was originally concealed by a wide band of cattails which was the origin for the name "hidden beach." Swimmers had to swim or walk through these cattails to reach open water. Over time, the beach was enlarged by the activities of the park users and this portion of the marsh fringe was destroyed.

At the time when these and other wetland communities were being altered or lost, their importance was neither understood nor valued. Today, it is recognized that wetlands provide a wide range of important functions in both urban and rural areas. They include:

Floodwater Storage and Retention. Wetlands can reduce flooding by slowing down the force of floodwater and by providing temporary storage of large amounts of storm or snowmelt waters. This can significantly reduce damages to roads, property, crops, etc..

Nutrient Use. Wetland plants absorb a wide variety of nutrients during their growth and development. This removal



means cleaner water leaves the wetland than enters it.

Sediment Entrapment. Wetlands can slow the flow of water moving through them. This allows sediments, nutrients, and other pollutants to settle out before the water is released to other wetlands, lakes, or streams.

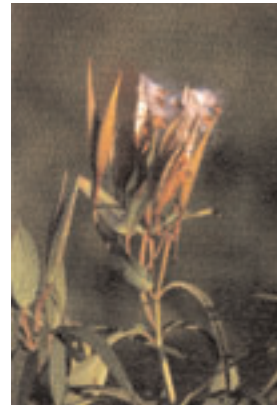
Shoreland Anchoring and Erosion Control. Wetland vegetation can reduce erosion along lake and stream banks by reducing forces associated with wave action.

Wildlife Habitat. Many species of wildlife, especially fish, spend all or part of certain seasons of the year in wetland habitats for breeding, brood-rearing, feeding, or cover purposes.

Aesthetics and Recreation. Wetlands are often beautiful areas to observe unique plant and animal species.

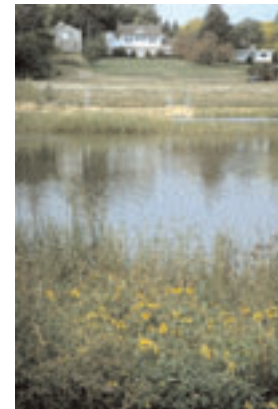
The vegetation of these existing marshes is dominated by cattails and few other native species. In addition, most of the shoreline of Brownie Lake is infested with non-native purple loosestrife which further reduces plant and animal diversity. Efforts should continue to be made to control and reduce this very invasive plant through specific biological and chemical methods. Wetland species such as hardstem bulrush, giant bur-reed, broad-leaved arrowhead and pickerel weed should be reintroduced into existing marsh areas as well as new areas along appropriate shoreline.

Originally once part of Cedar Lake, the new Cedar Meadows Wetland repre-



Marshes
Open Water

sents an important addition to the park. This 4.6 acre site was a mowed field until 1995 when a stormwater pond and marsh were constructed on the site through the Clean Water Partnership. This comprehensive project also included deepening Twin Lake in St. Louis Park and relocating the nearby storm sewer system to divert stormwater from the 1500 acre watershed to this wetland before it enters Cedar Lake. As much as 50% of the sediments and associated pollutants and nutrients such as phosphorus will be removed to improve the water quality for both lakes. Boardwalks and observation platforms were constructed in 1996 and a wide variety of native wetland species were also planted.



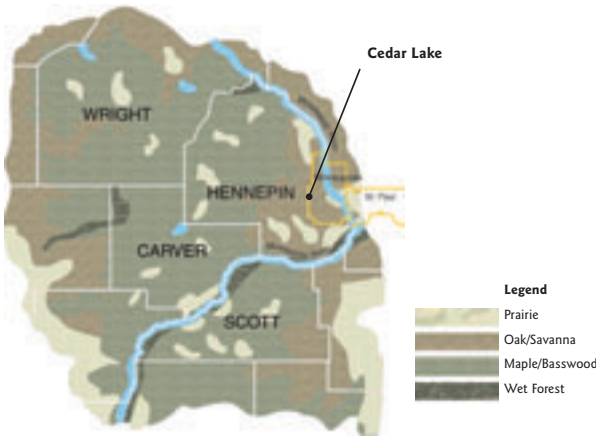
A smaller 170 acre watershed on the east side of Cedar Lake flows into a marshy cove. This area west of Kenilworth Corridor and south of West 21st Street could be enhanced to improve lake water quality, provide additional wildlife habitat and other park amenities.

"It is quiet and peaceful—the most ancient of cathedrals—antedating the oldest of manmade structures. More than that, it acts as nature's sponge, holding heavy moisture to prevent flooding during heavy rainfalls and slowly releasing the moisture and maintaining the water tables during dry cycles."

"In short, marshes and swamps are something to protect & preserve."

From the Minnesota Supreme Court's 1976 decision disallowing the construction of a highway through William Brynson's marsh which he sought to save

The Big Woods



The name, “Boise Grand,” or Big Woods was given by the seventeenth century French explorers to the unique section of the dense forests they encountered in south-central Minnesota. Extending between present day Faribault and St. Cloud, this 3,000 square mile area formed part of the band of hardwood forests running the entire length of the state. The Big Woods was distinct in being the largest continuous stand of maple-basswood forest along this band. Along its southern margins, especially where the Minnesota and Cannon Rivers acted as barriers to frequent fires, the Big Woods rose in fullness like a great dark wall against the otherwise open landscape. Today, less than 1% remains.

In Hennepin County and Minneapolis, the Big Woods extended as far east as the Mississippi River and the Chain of Lakes. Depending upon topography, soil type, and soil moisture, several different forest communities developed in the area we now call Cedar Lake Park.



Oak Forest

Oak forest was most common in the zone between the maple-basswood forest and oak savanna. A variety of oaks including red, white, northern pin, and bur are commonly present. Aspen groves and black cherry are also found. Typically, the canopy is relatively open, which allows for a variable understory. On moist sites, the vegetation consists of few shrubs and many ferns and wildflowers. On drier sites, a dense shrub layer of gray dogwood, hazelnut, prickly ash, and raspberries are found.



Maple-Basswood Forest

Maple-basswood forests occur on well-drained sites protected from wildfires. The tree canopy is dominated by sugar maples and American basswoods. Elms, ashes, and oaks can also be locally dominant. The tall, straight, narrow-crowned trees form a dense canopy permitting little sunlight from reaching the forest floor during the summer. The ground layer and understory are open, multi-layered, and patchy with saplings and seedlings of the canopy species along with ironwood and hickory. There are also a large number of plant species that bloom, produce seeds, and die back in May and June. These spring ephemerals include spring beauties, trillium, trout lilies, hepatica, jack-in-the-pulpit, and bloodroot.



Wet Forest

This forest community occurs on soils adjacent to shorelines or where the soil is often wet. Silver maples dominate the canopy with green ash, eastern cottonwood, and American elms most common. Other species such as black willow, hackberry, and boxelder may also be present. The ground layer and understory is open with many tree seedlings and saplings. Nettle and other herbs may dominate the ground-layer. Vines such as wild grape and wild cucumber are common. Existing low areas in the park could be enhanced to encourage greater water retention for ephemeral ponds and associated plant and animal species.





Current Forest Conditions

Since most of the area around both lakes has been significantly disturbed over the past 150 years, very little of the Big Woods forest communities remain. Most of the existing forested areas consist of tree species such as cottonwood and box elder which first appear on an altered landscape. In most forests, the dominant native species eventually replace these “pioneering” species over time. However, since there is no seed source for the other native species, the present woodland continues to be dominated by the cottonwoods, some of which have grown to majestic stature.

Compounding the low forest diversity is the extensive growth of European buckthorn. This small tree was introduced into this country in the early 1900’s and has proven to be very invasive. In some park areas, solid stands of buckthorn are the only vegetation present. This is not surprising since the tree produces a chemical that prevents other plants from growing in the same area.

The understory of these and other wooded areas is almost completely devoid of the rich diversity of ferns, wildflowers and shrubs once found here. Instead, the ground is completely lacking or composed of non-native species such as poor man’s garlic.

Fortunately, individual oak, maple, hickory, basswood, ironwood, and black cherry trees are still scattered throughout the park. Using these key indicator species for both the historic precedence and appropriate ecological conditions for reintroduction, native forest communities can once again return to Cedar Lake Park.



Restoration and Management

There are many components and stages to the long-term process of beginning, advancing, and maintaining the dynamic transition from the current woodland to the desired mix of native forest communities.

*Use existing indicator species and ecological conditions to determine core areas and transition zones for each of the respective forest communities.

*Remove non-native woody species such as European buckthorn and tatarian honeysuckle from park areas using standard and experimental control techniques. In areas requiring extensive buckthorn removal, a variety of methods including girdling fruit-bearing trees,



should be utilized to minimize wildlife disturbance and to avoid the appearance of a clear cut. These removal projects should include an associated planting component to further the transition to the desired forest community.

*Remove surface debris such as trash and demolition debris to the extent possible.

*Amend soil with compost from a temporary, on-site facility or other feasible source.

*Establish demonstration areas using a wide variety of native tree, shrub, fern, and herbaceous species and sizes in random, planting patterns.

*Selectively cut and thin existing tree species to accelerate the transition to desired species.

*Import soil and decaying wood from existing or threatened Big Woods forest communities to reintroduce bacteria, insects, fungi, and other important components to these forests

*Develop interpretive and participatory opportunities for school children, families, and adults to learn about and contribute to these forest community plantings.

*Establish transects and other monitoring methods to document and study the long term changes to these plant and animal communities.

Prairie and Oak Savanna

Only 150 years ago, more than 1 million square miles of North America — an area from central Canada south to the Mexican border and from Indiana west to the Rocky Mountains— formed the great continental grassland. Known as “prairie,” from the 17th century French explorers term for meadow, this vast and varied ecosystem was the largest tract of unbroken wilderness first encountered by the early European immigrants

Although the prairie contained a rich variety of grasses, wildflowers, and associated wildlife, many of these settlers, only saw “inexhaustible emptiness” to which they could bring the familiar—farms with crops and livestock, and eventually towns and cities. Over time, the prairie and savanna (grassland with scattered trees), became forever altered. Today, less than 1% remains. In Minneapolis, a few remnant prairie sites still exist within the park system along the Mississippi River and in Theodore Wirth Park. However these sites are small, isolated, and lack their former plant diversity. Recently, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board started an extensive program to maintain and enhance these sites as well as reintroduce these plant communities into many other park sites.

A 1854 land survey indicated that most of the area surrounding both Brownie and Cedar Lakes consisted of savanna. Today, there is very little evidence of savanna or prairie species remaining in the park. Even the long history of railroads in the park did not preserve these native plants. Railroads commonly used fire to keep vegetation from growing too close to their tracks. Inadvertently, this management practice resulted in railroads often becoming one of the few remaining places to find native prairie species. This was not the case for Cedar Lake. The few areas of savanna not altered by the railroads



also did not survive. Most of these areas eventually reverted to low quality oak and other woodlands.

Once the railroad had vacated the land and removed the tracks and other facilities, the 25 acre open area north of Cedar Lake became one of the outstanding features of the park. However, left unmanaged, this area of non-native grasses and herbs would eventually become a low quality woodland comprised primarily of cottonwoods, elms and box elders. This successional process can be seen on the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority property between the eastern portion

of the park and the Kenwood Parkway bluff. In order to retain the open vistas as well as increase ecological diversity and reduce maintenance needs, prairie and oak savanna were chosen as the primary plant communities for the Cedar Lake Trail corridor.

To provide even greater ecological diversity and aesthetic richness, the former flat topography of the area was reshaped to create shallow, water-retaining swales and low ridges. Excavation and grading began in April, 1995, and was completed that June. Since a tremendous amount of soil was moved from one location to another as part of the trail construction project, the existing vegetation was effectively eliminated from the entire site.

The soil was prepared for seeding and three different seed mixtures were used



throughout the 25 acre site. A short grass and flower mix was used for areas along and between the trails. A mixture of grasses and flowers adapted for wetter conditions was used for the swales, and tall grass/flower mix was used for the other areas. Individual trees and groupings of bur oaks and aspens will be planted along forest fringes to re-create savanna.

Several acres of turf on the north side of Brownie Lake were also converted to short grass prairie in 1996. Other areas of the park which can be converted to savanna include: most of the southern edge of the Cedar Lake Trail corridor, the south and west hillsides of the mound on the north side of Cedar Lake, the small turf area between the east shore of Cedar Lake and Upton Avenue South, and an interior, open woodland north of Burnham Road.



Oak Savanna

Oak savanna occupies the transition zone between the oak forests and the prairie, and can be described as an open grass- land with scattered trees. The stature and spacing of trees is variable, reflecting differences in soils,

topography, climate, and fire and/or grazing frequency. Small, open-grown bur oaks are most common with a ground layer of native grasses and flowers. In areas with more moisture or clay soils, larger oaks or clumps of northern pin oak and aspen can be quite common. Shrub cover is variable as well with American hazelnuts, willows, and lead plant being present.

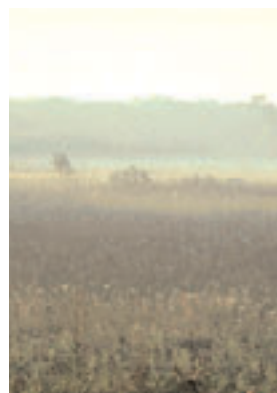
Savannas, like prairies, are ever changing. The fresh, green growth of the first grasses with short, pastel-colored flowers can be seen in April and May. In midsummer, the luxuriant growth of the grasses and the vibrant flower colors can be seen beneath the large, fluttering leaves of the bur oak. In fall, the purplish-green of the bluestems change to burnished copper, bronze, and tan. The spectacular golds of the goldenrods and aspens sway and flutter in the cooler breezes. Even in the whiteness of the winter, the dark, gnarly branches of the oaks and the dark seed-heads of the flowers and grasses emerge from all but the deepest snowdrifts to provide pleasing patterns and food for our hardest wildlife.



Prairie

Prairies, or open meadows, are found in the driest areas of the region and consist of a wide variety of grasses and flowers. Tall shrubs and trees are generally absent or widely scattered due to their intolerance to the periodic fires that burned across these areas. Differences in soil moisture and texture as well as slope angle and direction result in three different types of prairie: dry, mesic, and wet. However, all prairie species have deep and extensive root systems that allow them to thrive in the hot, dry summer conditions found in Minnesota.

Throughout the Cedar Lake prairie, grasses will provide the background for a natural tapestry with flecks of color provided by drifts of wildflowers. The low swales will be dominated by the tall, arching leaves of prairie cordgrass intermingling with the white, candelabra-like flowers of Culver's root, the pink of swamp milkweed, mauve of Joe-pye-weed, and the royal purple of ironweed. Curving ridges will be occupied by the fine-textured little bluestem, sideoats grama, and northern prairie dropseed



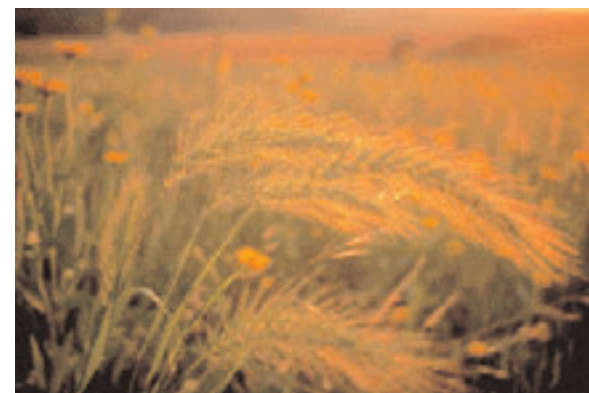
grasses interspersed with such plants as butterfly weed, coreopsis, blazingstar, and purple prairie clover. In the intermediate zones, big bluestem, Indian grass and switch grass will dominate with bursts of color provided by coneflowers, black-eyed susans, and yellow, daisy-like flowers on the tall, swaying stalks of compass plant and prairie dock.

Restoration and Management

Although prairie/savanna reintroduction or restoration does not take nearly as long as a forest conversion, this process requires several initial stages over a four to five year time frame.

STAGE 1 Removing Existing Vegetation
With the exception of oaks, aspens, and a few shrub species, woody vegetation is cut and removed from the site. Stumps may be treated with a chemical to eliminate sprouting. Non-native grasses and other herbaceous vegetation are treated with an appropriate herbicide.

STAGE 2 Seeding the Area Depending upon soils, topography, and other factors, different combinations of native grass and wildflower seed are planted



on the site. On most sites this is done using a seed drill to insure good soil-to-seed contact. On inaccessible areas, the seed will be spread by hand and raked into the soil. An annual grain such as oats or wheat will be seeded at the same time to provide a faster growing cover crop. These plants provide shade for the new seedlings, reduce erosion, and add organic material to the soil when they die in the fall.

STAGE 3 Transplants and Overseeding
Most new prairie plant growth is below ground where the plants devote most of their energy developing extensive root systems. This allows these plants to withstand the hot, dry weather conditions normally found in this region during the summer months. As a result, it takes three to five years before the prairie becomes fully established.

In order to accelerate this natural time schedule, two to four year old wildflowers, purchased from nurseries or grown under controlled conditions, will be transplanted onto the site in random locations. Bur oaks and aspens will be reintroduced into areas designated as savanna.

Depending upon the amount of rainfall and other conditions after seeding, some areas may require additional seeding. Seeds will be purchased or collected from existing prairies and sown into these areas.

STAGE 4 Short and Long-term Management
A combination of periodic wildfires and grazing by bison were critical to maintaining these plant communities prior to settlement. For the first few years of the restoration process, many annual weeds will grow on these sites while new prairie plants are becoming established. One to three mowings will occur on these sites during this time to control weed growth and minimize seed production. By the third and fourth year, the prairie species will begin to dominate the site. Selective removal of certain plants such as thistles and some tree seedlings will still be required. Fire will be used as the primary management tool once these prairie areas become established. Carefully controlled, prescribed fires will take place during the spring or fall over three year cycles to enhance and maintain these communities.

A Call to Action

Never in the history of the area around Cedar Lake has there been so much public attention and involvement as there is today. Public use, application of private and public resources, and involvement by a wide variety of groups, organizations and public agencies continues to grow. And as Cedar Lake Park experiences both dramatic and subtle changes, it has never been more important to plan for and manage the many changes facing the park. This opportunity, borne out of the continued interest and commitment of thousands of people, will have a significant impact on the park now and in the future.

In 1997, the Cedar Lake Trail is scheduled to be completed—realizing the goal to connect the Chain of Lakes to the Mississippi River. Planning and construction for the Kenilworth Trail, linking Cedar Lake Trail near I-394 with the Midtown Greenway to the south, will begin this year. Construction of the Bassett Creek Trail, which will connect the Cedar Lake Trail near Bryn Mawr Meadows with Theodore Wirth Park, is also scheduled to begin. The implications, relative to increased access and use of the park, are many and multifaceted.

The spiraling Cedar Grove has been designed, laid out on the land and dedicated in a well-attended public ceremony. The Big Woods Demonstration Project, a major ecosystem restoration project on the east side of Cedar Lake near 21st Street and Upton Avenue, is well underway. In part, this will include the removal of extensive areas of buckthorn—an invasive tree species which dominates many of park's woodlands. The Park Board Forestry Division has used experimental techniques to accelerate the conversion to a more diverse, native forest while minimizing the impact on people and wildlife. With partial funding through the Conservation Partnership Grant Program administered through the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, this effort is yet another example of the partnership between Cedar Lake Park Association and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.

Various stabilization projects are underway throughout the park. Many of these are smaller projects focused on reducing erosion by wood chipping, removing and re-routing paths as well as planting native tree and shrub species. An innovative, interim solution to reduce the numerous problems associated with mountain biking in Burnham Woods and elsewhere throughout the park will be evaluated and refined as long-term solutions are being developed.

The Upton Woods Area near 21st Street and Upton Avenue is one of many topics of interest for the Kenwood Isles Neighborhood Association. With a particular focus of public safety, the group has set aside Neighborhood Revitalization Program funds to plan and improve this area as one of the major gateways for the park. Cedar Lake itself has been the focus of significant efforts and expenditures by the Clean Water Partnership and the Cedar-Isles-Dean Neighborhood Association. Completion of the Cedar Meadows wetland on the southwest side of Cedar Lake and application of aluminum sulfate (alum) will substantially reduce the input of phosphorus and markedly improve the water quality of the lake.

The time is now for Cedar Lake Park. The opportunity to participate in any one of many facets to Cedar Lake Park is a call to action for each and every person who has come to know and cherish the park. The plans and steps being taken now to create and sustain the nature park will protect the park as it currently exists and provides the framework for all future park development and its maturation.

Perhaps most significantly, Cedar Lake Park represents a real opportunity to become the center of a new kind of community—one that seeks a harmonious balance between people and nature. Towards that goal, we encourage and welcome your interest and participation in these and future activities associated with Cedar Lake Park.





***“A thing is right
when it tends to preserve
the integrity, stability and beauty
of the biotic community.
It is wrong when it tends otherwise.”***

*—Aldo Leopold
from A Sand County Almanac*

DRAFT

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4/17/97