

POWDERHORN

LOCATION AND HISTORY

Powderhorn Lake and its environs were among the first places considered for a park in Minneapolis. Only two months after the park board was created by the state legislature and approved by Minneapolis voters in April 1883, residents in the vicinity of the lake petitioned the park board to make it a park. But instead of a park at Powderhorn Lake, the board's focus across south Minneapolis was on a parkway proposed by landscape architect Horace Cleveland that would have extended from the Mississippi River to Lake Calhoun along 34th Street. That plan would have incorporated Powderhorn Lake into a parkway that met up precisely with Summit



Avenue on the St. Paul side of the river. The parkway project across south Minneapolis was abandoned in 1885 because the land was too expensive.

During that time the park board did consider a park at Powderhorn Lake and between 1884 and 1887 was mostly frustrated in its efforts to acquire land by fee or donation. In 1890 the park board acquired 38 acres around the lake through condemnation. Almost as soon as the first land was acquired, residents in the area petitioned the park board to add 25 acres to the park on the west and south. Powderhorn Park was expanded in 1891 by nearly 20 acres, with only several individual lots still to be acquired to complete the park. Also in 1891, the park board established a skating rink on the lake, one of only five rinks maintained by the board. In 1892 Horace Cleveland and his son Ralph submitted their plan for Powderhorn Park. The name was taken from the name of the lake, which was named for its shape: an old powderhorn—a cow horn used to carry gunpowder. The name first appeared in an 1839 survey of the Fort Snelling Military Reservation.

The most striking feature of the Cleveland plan is that the lake at that time extended north to 32nd Street. The northern arm of the lake no longer exists; nearly one block of the lake was filled in the mid-1920s, after years of low water levels in the lake. Cleveland's plan for the park included the creation of an island near the southern shore and a bridge over the narrow neck of the lake at 33rd Street. In 1895 dredging deepened the lake and reduced its size by nearly eight acres, including the creation of the one-half acre island.

The western section of the park was initially graded and walks were laid out in 1899. The first playground was established at Powderhorn Park in 1907 along 10th Avenue between 32nd and 33rd Streets. A toilet building was installed as well. In the 1907 annual report new superintendent Theodore Wirth provided a detailed

plan for the development of Powderhorn Park, which included a feature Cleveland had recommended years before, a bridge over the narrow neck of the lake at about 33rd Street. Wirth's plan also included a much wider lake north of the bridge.

Wirth also recommended a recreation building at the southeast corner of the lake, complete with a boat landing in front of it. A shelter in that location was completed in 1908, and basketball hoops were also installed for the first time that summer. In 1911, the 10th Avenue playground was moved to the southeast corner of the park, because of noise complaints from neighbors. The first three tennis courts in the park were also built that year near 10th Avenue and 34th Street.

Beginning in 1911, Wirth began to advocate for reducing the size of the lake, due to dropping water levels. He finally got the go-ahead in 1922, but his plan for a new athletic field and grandstand at the park was not approved. Dredging of the lake to generate the fill for the northern arm was begun in 1924 and completed in 1925. During the reshaping of the park eleven new tennis courts were added as well.

The smaller lake became home to an important attraction in winter, a speed skating track that hosted national skating championships and Olympic speed-skating trials in the 1930s. The Olympic trials were held again at the track in 1947 and four of the nine skaters to win spots on the U.S. Olympic team were from Powderhorn Park. The speed skating track was moved to Lake Harriet in the early 1960s and later shifted to Lake Nokomis. The speed skating track was reopened at Powderhorn in 1990, but was shifted to Armatage Park in 1999 as an experiment. It has since been discontinued.

In 1963 the recreation building was renovated and became the first recreation center to have air-



Existing Conditions: Powderhorn



Preferred Plan: Powderhorn



Existing Conditions: Powderhorn Enlargement

conditioning. That year the hockey rink was moved from the lake, but general skating was retained. A new totlot for smaller children was installed in the park at 14th Avenue and 35th Street in 1968. The totlot was a prototype for nine others installed around the city later that year. The old twice-renovated shelter beside the lake was replaced with a modern recreation center with a gym in 1971-72. That facility was remodeled in 1996-97. At that time a pump system was installed in another attempt to control the level of water in the lake. A new fishing dock was also installed in the lake. Another innovation at Powderhorn Park was introduced in 1995 when "Powderhorn Prairie" was created by seeding the east and north hillsides of the park with native grasses. Construction of a new concrete path and lighting around Powderhorn Lake was completed in 2013.

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND CHARACTER

Powderhorn is the largest neighborhood park in the south service area and is the green heart of a unique neighborhood known for its artistic festivals, racial and socio-economic diversity, and creative spirit. Powderhorn Lake with its wooded island is surrounded by forested, hilly green space that seems far less developed than other neighborhood parks in the area. The park is laced with walking trails and peppered with a variety of active uses that nestle into the slopes and trees.

The recreation center area touches the southeastern edge of the lake. The building itself is always active. A wading pool, playground, basketball court, and parking lot are adjacent to the building. Three other playgrounds exist in the park, at the southeastern corner, along 10th Avenue, and on the flat ground adjacent to 14th Avenue. Sports activities also have a home in the park. The so-called "bowl" north of the lake (in the area of the former northern arm of the lake) is home to three ball diamonds and a large area of multi-use field space. The upper areas of the northern part of the park are also often used for pick-up sports. Five tennis courts sit in the southwestern corner of the park.

UPDATE EXISTING



Traditional Play Structure



Wading Pool



Stage / Bandshell



Designated Sledding Hill



Multi-use Field



Multi-use Diamond



Tennis Court



Basketball Court



Urban Agriculture Area



Equavolley Court



Restroom/Storage Building



Walking Loop Trail



Adult Fitness



Skating Rink

NEW/ ADDED



Nature play area



Adventure Play



Group Shelter



Premier Field



Multi-use Field



Urban Agriculture Area



Community Oven



Outdoor Gathering Space



Basketball Court



Canoe/Kayak Launch

Overall, Powderhorn feels idyllic. People stroll the paths, lounge under the trees, and contemplate the lake. Pockets of high activity—near the recreation center, on the sports fields—punctuate but don't overwhelm the quietude. The park, however, ramps up to excitement during the many festivals held there year-round. From art sleds to skating to basketball to pottery to strolling, Powderhorn offers variety as unexpected and rich as the neighborhood that surrounds it.

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PARKS

Wayfinding and connections from Powderhorn Park should focus on:

- The proposed Southside Greenway, a community and City of Minneapolis led project that will run on 10th Avenue immediately adjacent to the park. Exactly how the greenway interfaces with Powderhorn Park has yet to be determined, but the SSAMP supports continued discussions.
- The existing City of Minneapolis pedestrian and/or bicycle connection along 34th Street, which connects east to Corcoran Park and west to Central Gym.

THE PROPOSED DESIGN

The design for Powderhorn seeks to preserve the existing well-loved character of the park while making several key enhancements to the visitor experience. The trail network is mostly unchanged, and the forested slopes and naturalized plantings are preserved and enhanced. Two new picnic shelters—one by the sports area along 14th Avenue and the other near the recreation building—offer opportunities for large-group gathering. One features a community oven. Many facilities, such as the tennis courts, restroom building, stage, storage building, parking lot, and wading pool are retained in place but improved. The main changes proposed by the plan fall into three main categories: play, athletics, and the waterfront.

In the interest of diversifying play in the park and the service area as a whole, new nature and adventure play areas combine with some retained traditional play areas to offer a variety of experiences. The playgrounds by the recreation building and along 10th Avenue remain traditional, with play equipment in containers. On the slope facing away from 14th Avenue an adventure play area—with ziplines, bouldering, hill slides, and other features—expands the appeal to more age groups and physically challenges older kids and teens. In this same area, a small totlot provides an opportunity for younger children. In the southeastern corner of the park is a combined urban agriculture and nature play area. This unique play zone allows children and adults to participate in healthy, mentally and socially rich, cooperative, and calming play and work. These two activities go well together because both need similar infrastructure—water and sun exposure—and both foster the same spirit of getting back to the land.

In terms of athletics, the northern portion of the park is changed to address the recreational desires of the community. In the “bowl,” one multi-use diamond is removed to create more multi-use field space. At the northwestern corner of the park, along 10th Avenue, a new youth-size premier field replaces the poor quality ad-hoc grass area there now. Along 14th Avenue, the multi-use fields immediately adjacent to the street would be improved but retained as natural grass multi-use fields. New paved volleyball courts recognize the high level of use for this sport, while also addressing both neighbors' concerns about dust and dirt and players' desire for a hard surface. The volleyball courts are set back from the street, with additional trees as a buffer.










Near the recreation building, the plan takes better advantage of the lovely but currently under-appreciated vista across the lake. A new gathering space by the water is designed to allow interaction with the lake at any water level, while a larger “dock” reaches out over the water for fishing or simply hanging out. A key piece of this design is to modify the rear of the recreation center building to open onto the waterfront. Glassy

building extensions glow like lanterns in the summer night and winter evening, serving as warming house, rainy-day reading nook, or event space. A café could be included to offer healthy food and drink to park-goers. The community would very much prefer this be a local business with some history of contributing back to the community. The Powderhorn waterfront will become a destination for the neighborhood and the city—a meeting place for makers and creative souls, a resting place after a walk around the lake and through the woods, a multi-cultural place where many languages can be heard, and a community place that recognizes and enhances the beauty of the park.

KNOWN LAND USE AND COORDINATION ITEMS

No known land use issues exist with Powderhorn Park.

PROCESSES

	1: General Input Spring-Fall 2015	2: Initial Concepts + Supplemental Engagement Fall-Winter-Summer 2015/2016 <i>Input themes on initial and preferred concepts</i>	3: The Revised Concept Now
	<i>Input themes prior to initial concepts</i>		<i>Key elements of the concept</i>
aquatics	Wading pool is considered in poor condition, leading to safety issues.  Desire for bigger, deeper pool	no comments 	Wading pool in same general location
play	Play areas need improvement 	Support for retaining play area on southeast corner  Support for nature play 	Retain four play areas in the park: two traditional play areas near the recreation center and on the western edge of the park; one adventure play area with traditional equipment for smaller children in the northeast portion of the park; one nature play area combined with urban agriculture area at the southeast corner of the park
athletics	More need for soccer than for baseball 	Significant concern about fenced premier fields in the bowl at northern end of park; preference for open multi-use fields  Open areas on northwest corner of park and eastern edge of park used for pick-up sports Real desire for premier fields in the park	Removal of one multi-use diamond to create larger multi-use field space in the "bowl" at the northern end of the lake. Addition of multi-use field areas for unprogrammed play at the northeast corner of the park Addition of premier field at northwest corner of park
courts	Tennis courts well liked Basketball court heavily used and could use improvement 	Basketball better near the building; two courts necessary  Concern about dust and dirt from volleyball play Desire for hard-court volleyball	Five tennis courts in same general location Two full basketball courts near the building in the southeastern portion of the park Addition of three hard-court volleyball courts near 14th Avenue, buffered from street

PROCESSES CONT.

	1: General Input Spring-Fall 2015 <i>Input themes prior to initial concepts</i>	2: Initial Concepts + Supplemental Engagement Fall-Winter-Summer 2015/2016 <i>Input themes on initial and preferred concepts</i>	3: The Revised Concept Now <i>Key elements of the concept</i>
winter	no comments	no comments	Skating on lake, as existing Expansion of building toward lake to include winter warming house and possible cafe/restaurant
landscape	Urban agriculture areas desired More native plantings that are well maintained, not just weedy patches Improve water quality in lake; add rain gardens and other storm water management	no comments	Urban agriculture area designated at southeast corner of park (in concert with nature play area), and along southern slope Addition of naturalized plantings throughout park, primarily on slopes
other	Like fishing pier/dock; consider canoe/kayak storage and boat rental Support for vita course around lake Stage area could be improved into a full amphitheater setting Add concessions / restaurant	Consider group shelter with community oven near the building General support for building expansion with concession and warming house Mixed opinions on the new dock on the north end of the lake	Revision of southern dock to create a higher-quality seating, gathering, and fishing area; addition of smaller dock at northern end of lake Addition of group shelter with community oven near the recreation center; addition of a group shelter near the adventure play area and multi-use fields along the eastern edge of the park Addition of canoe/kayak storage near recreation center building Enhancement of vita course Enhancement of stage in same general location

COST ESTIMATE

Asset Type	Project	2017 ESTIMATED COST/PROJECT	Implementation Sequence	Prioritization Category	Applicable SSAMP Actions
Aquatics	Wading Pool, incl. demolition of existing wading pool	\$ 739,226	stand-alone	FUNDED	16
Play	East: Traditional Play Structure in existing container	\$ 216,000	stand-alone	FUNDED	16, 23b, 23d
Play	West: Traditional Play Structures in existing container	\$ 216,000	stand-alone	FUNDED	16, 23b, 23d
Play	North: Small Traditional Play Structure in new container	\$ 108,000	stand-alone	FUNDED	16, 23b, 23d
Play	North: Adventure Play Area	\$ 1,396,316	stand-alone	PLANNED	16, 23a, 23b, 23d
Play	Southeast: Nature Play in new container	\$ 698,158	with urban agriculture	PLANNED	16, 23a, 23b, 23d
Athletics	Athletic Field renovation, bowl: 2 multi-use diamonds and multi-use field space	\$ 2,488,728	stand-alone	PLANNED	16, 21a, 21b, 21d
Athletics	Premier Athletic Field, 10th Avenue side	\$ 1,149,908	stand-alone	PLANNED	16, 21c, 21f
Athletics	Athletic Field renovation, 19th Avenue side: multi-use field spaces	\$ 312,118	stand-alone	PLANNED	16, 21b, 21d
Courts	Tennis Court (5)	\$ 533,886	stand-alone	PLANNED	16
Courts	Basketball Court (2)	\$ 213,554	stand-alone	PLANNED	16, 22a
Courts	Volleyball Court (3)	\$ 320,331	stand-alone	PLANNED	16
Landscape	Naturalized areas	\$ 328,545	stand-alone or with other projects as appropriate	PLANNED	25, 26, 29
Landscape	Existing parking lot renovation	\$ 276,601	stand-alone	PLANNED	28
Landscape	Urban Agriculture Area	\$ 25,018	with southeast play area	DEPENDENT	19
Other	Adult Fitness: refurbish fitness course around lake	\$ 41,068	stand-alone	PLANNED	16, 18
Other	Building expansion	\$ 1,355,248	with waterfront	PLANNED	
Other	Group picnic shelters: new shelter near sports fields	\$ 90,350	stand-alone	PLANNED	18
Other	Gathering area near recreation building: shelter, community oven, seating	\$ 137,989	stand-alone	PLANNED	18

COST ESTIMATE (CONT.)

Asset Type	Project	2017 ESTIMATED COST/PROJECT	Implementation Sequence	Prioritization Category	Applicable SSAMP Actions
Other	Gathering area near recreation building: shelter, community oven, seating	\$ 137,989	stand-alone	PLANNED	18
Other	Renovate Existing Buildings: stage, restroom building, storage building	\$ 225,875	stand-alone	PLANNED	18
Other	Renovate walking paths	\$ 1,051,344	stand-alone	PLANNED	10, 16, 17
Other	Waterfront Area by recreation building	\$ 144,560	with building expansion	PLANNED	18
Other	Dock at northern end	\$ 39,425	stand-alone	PLANNED	
Other	Miscl. signs, trees, furniture	\$ 157,246	appropriate	PLANNED	9, 10, 17
TOTAL		\$ 12,265,494			

OPERATIONS ESTIMATE

FACILITIES	Total Per Unit Operations Cost	△ Qty	△ Cost
Play Areas	\$ 7,500	-1	\$ (7,500)
Nature Play	\$ 7,500	1	\$ 7,500
Adventure/Climbing Play	\$ 7,500	1	\$ 7,500
Premier Field	\$ 25,000	1	\$ 25,000
Multi-use Diamond	\$ 20,000	-1	\$ (20,000)
Full Court Basketball	\$ 1,500	1	\$ 1,500
Volleyball Court	\$ 1,500	3	\$ 4,500
Outdoor Gathering Space	\$ 10,000	1	\$ 10,000
Urban Agriculture Area	\$ 15,000	1	\$ 15,000
Group Shelter	\$ 4,000	2	\$ 8,000
Canoe/Kayak Storage	\$ 5,000	1	\$ 5,000
Community Oven	\$ 1,500	1	\$ 1,500
Difference			\$ 58,000