

# IMPROVING ARDEN PARK

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS VOL. 3

### WHY ARDEN PARK?

Arden Park is the latest in a series of improvements to restore Minnehaha Creek which is impaired due to decades of impacts from urbanization. The creek is polluted from unfiltered stormwater runoff, groundwater levels have made the green space soggy and unusable, and existing facilities are due for replacement. This project will restore the creek and improve recreational enjoyment of this community amenity.

### WHY REMOVE THE DAM?

Minnehaha Creek is listed on the state's impaired waters list due to low dissolved oxygen, high chloride, and high E. coli bacteria which has led to poor biological communities.\* Over the last century, the creek has been ditched and dammed, wetlands have been filled, and urban runoff has increased. Removing the dam will improve habitat, natural communities, and increase natural creek function.

### TREE PRESERVATION

In response to community input, we minimized the number of trees that will be removed. The construction will remove 79 trees with trunks eight inches or larger in diameter. Of those 79, 22 are ash trees that would eventually be killed by the emerald ash borer, and two are oaks in the free skate area that are already dying. The three willow trees near 54th Street will remain in the park.

The city plans to remove invasive buckthorn and 57 additional ash trees that are eight inches or larger in diameter that are expected to become infected by the emerald ash borer. Three ash trees will be treated to prevent emerald ash borer infestation, and others may be saved depending on accessibility for treatment.

To replace the 79 trees that are removed during construction and the 57 ash trees that will be removed by the city, 407 high-quality native trees will be planted to create a diversified forest.

### 54<sup>TH</sup> STREET BRIDGE

As part of design, we are assessing the opportunity to remove the concrete slab under the 54<sup>th</sup> Street bridge. The concrete panels would be replaced by large stones and cobbles. This will only change the grade under the bridge by a matter of inches and will not impact the formation of the fishing hole or cause it to fill. The foundation of the bridge will not be exposed, and the original bridge designer will review the design to ensure there is no risk in replacing the concrete with natural stone.

## WHAT WILL CHANGE?

- Removes the pre-1938 four-foot dam, improving passage for paddlers and fish
- Restores over 2,100 feet of Minnehaha Creek and connects it to existing wetlands and floodplain
- Improves habitat for fish, birds, and other wildlife
- Addresses scientifically documented impairments
- Will treat 80 acres of regional stormwater and keep over 30 pounds of phosphorus per year out of the creek
- New walking trails, park building, and playground
- Drier and more usable lawn area
- Retains existing leisure skate area and hockey rink

## COMMUNITY INPUT

The project design is based on the concept plan that was developed with community input over the course of the past year. The project layers community goals and plans with natural resources benefits to maximize public investment.



The CITY of  
**EDINA**



**MINNEHAHA CREEK**  
WATERSHED DISTRICT  
QUALITY OF WATER, QUALITY OF LIFE

\*2003 Minnehaha Creek Stream Assessment and the 2013 Total Maximum Daily Load Study for Minnehaha Creek  
[www.minnehahacreek.org](http://www.minnehahacreek.org)



## PROJECT GOALS

- Maintain rustic character of the park
- Improve public use experience throughout the park
- Increased fishing and in-stream recreation opportunities
- Improved visual and physical access to Minnehaha Creek
- Update aging park facilities
- Improve public safety
- Improved biological and geological function and value of creek and surrounding corridor
- Regional stormwater management

## FUNDING

Project cost estimates have increased as a result of design changes requested by the community. The project cost estimate is \$4.7 million which will be funded by Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, the City of Edina, and grants.

Learn more about the project at [www.minnehahacreek.org/arden-park](http://www.minnehahacreek.org/arden-park)



*The dam when dry*



*The dam with water flowing*

The dam dates back to at least 1938 and is one of two remaining man-made barriers left on Minnehaha Creek that impair the creek's natural function. Detailed hydrologic and hydraulic modeling shows that the creek will continue to scour and transport sediments below the bridge after the dam is removed. The restoration will also include adding rock riffles and deeper pools to the creek throughout Arden Park for more fish habitat throughout the seasons.