

QUARRY LAKE PARK 6201 INNOVATION BLVD.



SATELLITE IMAGE SOURCE: ESRI

EXISTING PARK CONDITIONS (AND CONTEXT)

- 1 ACTIVE UNION PACIFIC HEAVY RAIL
- 2 QUARRY LAKE PARK VEHICULAR CONNECTION FROM INNOVATION BLVD
- 3 VARIOUS INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES
- 4 HIGHWAY 169
- 5 SOUTHBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD
- 6 SOUTHBRIDGE COMMUNITY PARK AND DOG PARK
- 7 XCEL ENERGY POWER STATIONS
- 8 BITUMINOUS ROADWAYS STORAGE FACILITY
- 9 BITUMINOUS PARKING LOT FOR QUARRY LAKE PARK
- 10 FISHING PIER AND PARK PERGOLA STRUCTURE WITH PICNIC TABLES
- 11 KAYAK LAUNCH BEACH
- 12 FOOTBRIDGE CONNECTION OVER STORMWATER CHANNEL
- 13 GRAVEL SERVICE ROAD
- 14 WATER SKI TEAM BOAT SLIPS AND BOAT RAMP
- 15 STORMWATER RETENTION FACILITIES FROM INDUSTRIAL AREAS
- 16 STORMWATER CHANNEL
- 17 TRAIL CONNECTION TO FUTURE 12TH AVE TRAIL

EXISTING PARK CHARACTER AND HISTORY

In the land of over 10,000 lakes, Shakopee was recently able to add one more body of water to its park system roster. The recent acquisition of Quarry Lake Park has great potential to add another layer of regional attractions to the City's already impressive array of local attractions.

Not a naturally occurring lake, Quarry Lake was formed by private quarrying operations that began in the 1960's, triggering an underground spring to fill the excavated land with fresh water. The spring continues to feed the lake with fresh water today.

At just over 100 acres, this park was acquired by the City in 2005, with improvements ongoing since 2014. These improvements have thus far been comprised of building a vehicular bridge connection to a new surface parking lot off of Innovation Boulevard, a pedestrian bridge connection into the park over the stormwater channel to 12th Ave (where a future trail connection is being planned to connect to Hwy 83), a fishing pier, and

a pergola structure. Awards and grants from the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community and the State/DNR have made a lot of these improvements possible.

Quarry lake is regularly stocked by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources with rainbow, brown, and brook trout and has been a Designated Trout Lake since May of 2018. Visitors can expect a healthy stock of trout in the lake, as thousands of yearling trout are stocked on an annual basis. Fishing and non-motorized watercraft are allowed in the northeast portion of the lake, demarked by water buoys. A portion of the lake is reserved at most times by a local water skiing club, so users of the lake must be aware of motorized boats and water skiers at all times.

The main and overwhelming group of users of Quarry Lake is the Shockwaves Water Skiing team, who has contractual rights to use the lake for practice and shows for years to come. Water skiing can be a directly incompatible activity to non-motorized boating or pier fishing, creating large wakes on the lake and using a large amount of the lake surface. Incompatible uses aside, the water ski club does attract potential users to the park with their open invitations to water shows and regular learn-to-water-ski classes that are open for the public to sign up for at a cost.

Overall, even after the improvements done to date, the existing character of Quarry Lake Park is one of isolation and incompleteness. With a simple fishing pier and sole pergola structure, there is not much for a park user to do once arrived at the park if one is not interested in observing water skiing or fishing from the pier. There is no path circulation system around the lake, and the kayak launch beach is rather challenging to find and carry a kayak to. The park is isolated from most of the surrounding community by a heavy rail line, industrial and warehouse businesses, and a large highway surrounding the park. There are no existing pedestrian connections to the park, and is hard to find in a vehicle.

There are many opportunities to create a sense of place and purpose in this park that would be cost-efficient, create partnerships with surrounding businesses, and fill gaps in services available in the City.

QUARRY LAKE PARK CONCEPT PLAN



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The master plan design for Quarry Lake Park creates a destination 1.5-mile looped trail system around the fresh spring lake. A proposed natural surfacing material would maintain a softer aesthetic and keep the cost of the trail at a minimum compared to a paved surface. This loop is a reflection of consistent themes heard through public engagement sessions where park users have voiced the desire to have more looped trail systems and access to the natural environment. A looped trail system has also been portrayed in previously approved concept plans for the park. To expand on the potential of a connected trail system in the park, the lake loop would link to and be a part of a mountain biking system on the outer perimeter of the park.

The City of Shakopee currently does not have a multi-mile dedicated mountain biking trail facility. Adjacent to Quarry Lake Park on the south and east sides of the park is a significant amount of mixed wooded and open land that is underutilized, belonging to Xcel Energy. It is recommended that the City partner with their energy neighbor who has shown excitement about the opportunity to be a good steward in their community and allow low-impact use on their property. By weaving a mountain bike trail through this underutilized Xcel property, over four miles of varied trail can serve a variety of events, from high school races to a full afternoon of challenging exercise for everyday park users. A quality trail system would have a regional draw and complement other proposed improvements at Quarry Lake Park.

As a part of a separate project, a trail connection to 12th Ave/Green Valley Business Park is currently being constructed by the City. It is recommended that this trail be brought into Quarry Lake Park via a unique wetland experience. This could be achieved by naturalizing and enhancing the stormwater area west of the park, to serve park users, bring some naturalization and habitat to the area, as well as provide an outdoor respite for employees that work in the warehouses adjacent to the area.

One imperative connection recommendation that would greatly serve the community is a proposed pedestrian bridge over Highway 169. This bridge has been identified as an important non-motorized connection in Envision Shakopee to alleviate the greatly limited pedestrian connections to the park. The Southbridge neighborhood is the closest residential development

and community to Quarry Lake Park, but is physically disconnected from this great amenity. Currently, a resident who lives in the center of Southbridge (just over half of a geographic mile from Quarry Lake Park) would have a 10 to 15-minute drive in their vehicle to get to the park. This same park user would have a 1.5-hour walk, or a 30-minute bike ride to the park. A pedestrian bridge would provide a direct, safer connection for park users from this community and other nearby potential users, turning a 1.5 hour walk into a 20 minute walk. At a higher level, these connections are especially important as the City creates more miles of trail system to reinforce existing trails and develop sensible connections to get frequent users to the parks. Further, Highway 169 will remain a barrier to trail users in existing and future communities on the greater east side of Shakopee until a better pedestrian connection is created.

The water ski association will be using Quarry Lake for the foreseeable future. The group brings a buzz to the park with their regular members and by attracting the public who come to watch their performances. Planning for an improved boat launch and viewing area for spectators on the slope of the lake would be a positive enhancement to the park. Because the water skiing portion of the lake is restricted for non-motorized boat users, a more relevant location for the kayak launch would allow easier access for canoers or kayakers to launch from, and provide a point of access for people to interact with the water from, potentially becoming a beach in the future. Pulling back the topography of the lake edge at the identified location would provide an easier transition to the water from the parking lot for water users.

Adding additional amenities such as a play feature, obstacle course, and a pavilion to improve the picnic area near the existing pergola structure would provide for a more extensive park experience. Restroom facilities will be provided in the picnic pavilion, and whether permanent or portable, should also continue to be provided in the south portion as the park develops.

Quarry Lake Park is also a great candidate for the new home of the Vietnam-era helicopter and granite-based flag monument currently located at Memorial Park. Users can observe the historic chopper in a prominent location while visiting the park, with more space available in this location for gathering and events related to the helicopter and flag. Intentional landscaping would frame these special community elements.

QUARRY LAKE PARK

CONCEPT PLAN CONT.



Partnering with Xcel Energy to enter into a land use agreement would allow for a mountain biking trail system at Quarry Lake Park. The use of Xcel's property is imperative to the success of a trail system that would be attractive enough to attract high school mountain biking events, as well as mountain biking events from other groups in the region. Using the existing topography and combination of wooded and open spaces, the mountain bike trail would be highly functional and desirable for users.



Relocating the sand beach to have better proximity to the parking lot would allow for easier use of the beach, requiring a visual connection to the launch area as well as a shorter distance for users to carry their kayaks and canoes.