A VISION FOR THE GREATER INDIAN LAKE NEIGHBORHOOD AND BEYOND

NEIGHBORHOOD

Morgan's Landing (aka Morgan Park)

Implement Master Plan as developed by the community (Approved by Worcester City Council 2014) which includes:

- Shoreline redesign to deter illegal swimming and watercraft congregation.
- Walkway along shoreline includes fitness amenities and connects to Indian Lake Loop.
- Splits facility access to add amenities for non-boat ramp visitors including playground & picnic area.
- Handicap accessible fishing pier.
- Gatehouse which paves the way to instituting decal or fee for boat ramp users to improve facility management.
- Replacing temporary boat ramp with permanent ramp in suggested position which eliminates boats entering water at narrow 'pinch point'.

Additional improvement suggestions:

- Boat washing station.
- Accessible restrooms.

City Beach at the end of Clason Road

Implement Master Plan as developed by the community (Approved by Worcester City Council 2014) which includes:

- Improved lighting and adding cameras to improve security.
- Gated entry points will eliminate the need for boulders which currently serve to 'close' this facility and are often moved by the public to open it, requiring city additional city resources to correct.
- Formal parking lot for visitors.
- Provide accessibility to the beach.
- Replaces dilapidated bath house with new accessible facility.

Additional improvement suggestions:

- Address erosion issues at the beach.

Shore Park improvements

Implement remaining Master Plan phases (Approved by Worcester City Council 2014). Approximately $1M first phase was completed in 2019 which included an accessible bath house. Funding sources for phase 1 were City of Worcester, YMCA of Central MA and the Hanover Insurance Foundation.

Remaining items to complete community developed Master Plan include:

- Formal entry with gate house and security cameras.
- Playground.
- 2 tennis courts.
- Multi-purpose playing field.
- Replace parking lot with new design and improved drainage.
- Walking trail to connect to the Indian Lake Loop.
- Non-motorized boat launch (canoes, kayaks).

Additional improvements suggested:

- Handicap accessible fishing pier.
- Address erosion issues at the beach.

Indian Lake Loop

The 3 mile Indian Lake Loop is traversed by thousands of residents and visitors every year. It is regularly used by walkers, runners and incorporated into numerous fundraisers. In addition to beautiful views of Indian Lake, the loop passes 4 city owned parks and beaches, 2 World War II memorials, a public middle school, 2 fitness clubs, a senior living complex, numerous small businesses, and hundreds of homes.

- Improve pedestrian/bike passage at the east side of the lake. Currently, the 'Loop' brings the user down Norton Drive which is scarcely maintained and is aesthetically challenged. There are added safety concerns in this area pursuant to expected increase in traffic with the Amazon location at the former Greendale Mall. Improving this section of the Loop is greatly needed. Ideally, an elevated boardwalk that connects Shore Drive and West Boylston Drive along Rt 190 would avoid the Norton Drive stretch completely; at a minimum, upgrading Norton Drive to improve pedestrian/bike friendly passage, aesthetics and safety must be a priority.
- Upgrade sidewalks and crosswalks along the 3 mile loop to provide consistent accessibility for all. Currently many of the sidewalks do not meet ADA standards for accessibility. In addition, many sidewalks are in serious disrepair.
- Create a bike lane that can be safely traversed on the 3 mile loop, connects to surrounding neighborhoods and city bike trail system.
- Wayfinder and informational signage to support direction, safety, and neighborhood history. A series of recommendations have been suggested as part of independent qualifying projects by students at WPI including using a stripe like Boston's Freedom Trail to lead the user along the Loop, the development of an app which can highlight area amenities, and businesses and an archive of neighborhood history. Funding to implement these ideas would be a great asset to the neighborhood.

149 West Boylston Drive

Begin the master planning process involving the entire community; suggested implementation not to proceed Morgan's Landing, City Beach or Morgan's Landing. Improvements must include securing access to lake level controls.

WATER QUALITY

Dredge south end of Indian Lake- Indian Lake, like many urban waterways, has been on the receiving end of large amounts of material that is not native to the waterway. Referred to as sediment, it is silt and sand from roadways which can be filled with oils, nutrients and chemical compounds that can be harmful to the lake. When sediment builds up, it contributes to the shallowness of the waterway, making the water warmer and allowing the sunlight to more easily reach plants, contributing to excessive growth that affects recreational opportunities, dissolved oxygen and fish habitat.

Based on a Dredge Feasibility Assessment funded by the Indian Lake Watershed Association in 2019, the south end of the lake (primarily between Sears Island and Grove Street), could benefit by removal of approximately 75 cubic yards of sediment that has accumulated in the lake. It would increase depth, decrease water temperature, improve dissolved oxygen, and fish habitat. It should also provide relief from some of the nonnative invasive plant species that have plagued this portion of the lake.

Little Indian diagnostic/feasibility study- Little Indian Lake, located on the south end of Indian Lake, desperately needs clear goals and a plan to reduce the need for frequent herbicide treatments and management each year due to eutrophication. Without a continuous flow of water, the lake becomes stagnant. It consistently endures ongoing challenges with nonnative, invasive plants such as Duckweed, Watermeal as well as frequent algal blooms. The lake is jointly owned by the City of Worcester and abutting properties. As of 2021, all management expense has fallen on the shoulders of the abutters with support from the Indian Lake Watershed Association. A diagnostic/feasibility study is significant to understanding the costs and benefits to improve this waterway long term.

Feasibility study to assess the benefits of improving water flow through the Sears Island Causeway- The pipe/culvert through the Sears Island Causeway, originally intended to circulate lake water has not been able to properly serve this function in many years. This causes water to become stagnant, especially at the bottom of Huntington Avenue and the south end of the lake. This may contribute to higher water temperatures and more frequent algal blooms. A feasibility study performed by a licensed engineering firm could formally evaluate the benefits and costs associated with enlarging the culvert at the Sears Island Causeway and/or other options that may improve water quality at the south side of the causeway.

CITYWIDE

Manny's Boxes: Funding and installation of 'Manny's Boxes' at all City of Worcester waterways. Dedicated to the memory of Worcester Police Officer Enmanuel Familia, the boxes contain life jackets, a buoy ring and 50 feet of rope which could provide immediate assistance in the critical first minutes when someone is struggling in the water, while awaiting first responders to arrive.

Expansion of the Lakes and Ponds Program: The establishment of the Lakes and Ponds Program in 2016 was a pivotal step towards improving Worcester's recreational 'Blue Spaces'. This program has been instrumental in managing our waterways by monitoring important data, applying new and innovative management techniques, collaborating with lake and pond stewards, and engaging more stakeholders. This program has elevated Worcester to a leader in the realm of municipal lake and pond management, yet the program is only focused on our 4 public waterways with public access. It is now critical that this program be provided the tools and staff to include all of Worcester's waterways.

Snow removal equipment to support keeping sidewalks open year-round: The Indian Lake Loop has numerous locations that are not plowed during the winter months, hampering resident ability to move safely on sidewalks, often forcing them into the streets. This problem is not limited to our neighborhood. In addition, this equipment could quite possibly be used to support snow removal at city parks. Often, these facilities provide opportunities for sledding, snowshoeing and access to skating and ice fishing. Having parking lots open and accessible for residents would be a great asset to quality of life in Worcester.