Willow Park Neighborhood Association

We are your neighborhood association.

We 're on the web! www.neighborhoodlink.com/stlouispk/willowpk/

Willow Park Neighborhood Association

Fun Facts:

The Willow Park Neighborhood has:

- 1,908 residents
- 973 housing units
- 192.9 acres
- 13.1% parks and open space
- 1.8% commercial/ industrial property

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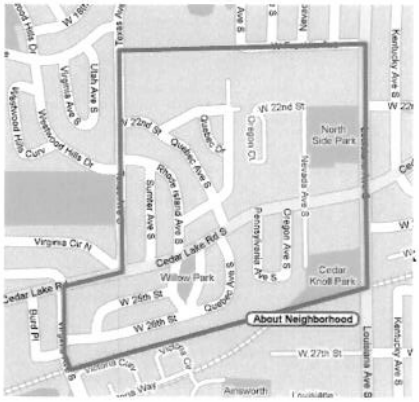
What exactly is Willow Park again?

The Willow Park Neighborhood is located in northwestern St. Louis Park. It occupies 192.9 acres and includes 973 housing units (301 single family homes, 326 condominiums, 38 townhomes and 308 apartments.) The population as of the 2002 census was 1,908.

St. Louis Park Jr. High is located in our neighborhood. Public parks include Rotary North Side Park, Carroll Hurd Park, Cedar Knoll Park and Willow Park. Fire Station 2 and a portion of the Westwood Shopping Center that includes Almsted's Super Valu are within its boundaries. Parks and open space comprise 13.1%. Commercial and industrial make up 1.8%.



The Willow Park Neighborhood Association formed In March of 2008 when a group of neighbors met and decided to organize. Although one of St. Louis Park's larger neighborhoods, Willow Park, formerly North Side, had never been organized.

Organization allows our neighborhood to apply for grant funds that are available through a trust with the city. These funds are designated for community building activities such as our Fall Socials and park clean-up projects.

Participation in the Neighborhood Assn. is open to all residents.

How can I get involved?

The Willow Park Neighborhood Association can only succeed if lots of neighbors participate. We need your ideas and energy. First, please email me if you can assist with the upcoming Fall Picnic. Help is needed with making signs, soliciting donations from local businesses and other general event planning. Help will also be needed on the day of the event with set-up, tear down, staffing the grills, etc.

Next, we want to be about more than planning parties. Some neighbors have expressed interest in working with the city to improve our parks and public spaces. Others want to organize events for children, progressive dinners, garden tours, neighborhood garage sales, etc. We also need the help of someone with graphic design expertise to design our neighborhood signs.

Please email me at dkjraatz@yahoo.com to volunteer or to share your ideas. I look forward to working with you.

Primary Election to be held September 15 for Open Ward 4 City Council Seat

Mark your calendar to vote in this year's primary election on Tuesday, Sept. 15. Three candidates are vying for an open St. Louis Park City Council Seat representing Ward 4. Incumbent C. Paul Carver is not seeking reelection. Candidates are (in alphabetical order):

- Thomas Peterson— an Elliot View Neighborhood resident
- Julia Ross—a Willow Park resident
- Bill Theobald—a Willow Park resident

Ward 4 is the only ward with a primary election for City Council this year.

The primary election will determine which two candidates will compete in November's general election. Ward 4 encompasses the entire northwest quadrant of St. Louis Park and all of the Willow Park Neighborhood.

Two candidates, Julia Ross and Bill Theobald participated in a forum organized by the Minnesota League of Women Voters on August 26. That forum is available for viewing online at the city's website or at http://www.stlouispark.org/video_on_demand.htm . It is listed under Civic Programs—City Council Ward 4 Candidate Forum. This program is also running periodically on cable access TV through election day.

Candidates at the forum provided opening statements detailing their backgrounds and visions for future commercial and residential development in Ward 4. They also fielded questions from those in attendance. Even hot-button topics such as whether or not to add new sidewalks were discussed at length.

Thanks to Costco and Cub Foods for donations that helped make our 2008 Fall Social a success.

Over 200 neighbors attended last year's Fall Social.

Thanks to those who attended the 2008 Willow Park Fall Social. Yes, it has been almost one year since we last gathered in Willow Park for a barbeque and a performance by the newly formed Park Theater Company. The main event, however, was taking the opportunity to get to know each other. This is what made our event successful.

Help us build on our success. Come join your neighbors at our 2nd annual Fall Picnic in the Park on Sunday, September 27 from 3-6pm at Willow Park for food, fun and the chance to make new connections.

We'll be grilling hamburgers and hotdogs. Chips and fruit will also be provided. Please bring your own beverage and a dish or dessert to share if you can. We will also be collecting donations for our local food shelf STEP.

In the event of inclement weather, a back-up date will be Sunday, Oct. 4. Other details are posted on our website: www.neighborhoodlink.com/stlouispk/willowpk/

Park Clean-Up Project

Members of the Willow Park Neighborhood Association completed a park clean-up project on Saturday 4/25 at Willow and Cedar Knoll Parks. 10 residents worked together to collect dozens of garbage bags full of trash.

While the parks were in fairly decent shape overall, there were some areas that required extra attention. Litter was especially thick in Cedar Knoll Park near the hill on Louisiana Avenue and along the railroad tracks.

Thanks to all who participated in this event. Thanks also to staff at the St. Louis Park Municipal Service Center who loaned us "grabby sticks. " These made the clean-up effort much easier for all involved.

Given the success of this project, we hope to make it an annual spring event. Watch for future emails and postings on our website with details as spring approaches.

Willow Park Neighborhood Association

At our:

Second Annual Fall Picnic

Kosher hot dogs, hamburgers, chips and fruit will be provided. Please bring your own beverage and a dessert or side-dish to share.
MOON BOUNCE FOR THE KIDS!

Sunday, September 27

From: 3-6 PM

@Willow Park

2500 Rhode Island Ave S

(Cedar Lake Rd at Rhode Island Ave)

For more information or to volunteer, please contact
David Raatz (dkjraatz@yahoo.com)
or check out our website at http://
www.neighborhoodlink.com/stlouispk/willowpk

Willow Park
Neighborhood Association

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Editor's Note:
This is a neighborhood publication. If you have an article or idea you would like considered for a future edition, please email me at dkjraatz@yahoo.com.

A new community garden opened in June in Carroll Hurd Park behind Peace Presbyterian Church

Reflections at the end of a season of community gardening

It was a beautiful day in June when I met a few of my fellow gardeners, shovels in hand. Although a city work crew had tilled a patch of land in Carroll Hurd Park and had laid stakes to mark boundaries, much thick turf remained to be dug up before seeds could be planted in the earth.

That afternoon I introduced myself to a grandma planning a garden with her daughter and granddaughter. I also met a young woman who decided to take up gardening while making plans for her summer wedding. We all were excited to discuss our ideas and exchange seeds.

This is how a small community of gardeners was born. As the days passed, I met other gardeners putting up chicken wire fencing and transplanting tomato plants.

Our first challenge was of the small, cute, fuzzy variety. New litters of rabbits arrived at our garden gates hungry and ready for an all-you-can-eat buffet. Those who had installed plastic fencing around their beds quickly learned that plastic is no match for a hungry bunny. Lettuce and green beans were quickly mowed down.

Our next hurdle arrived in the form of a long draught. Promised water spigots were delayed. The city provided water in garbage containers but these quickly emptied as gardeners filled their watering cans.

Finally, rains came and crops grew. Now, our only challenge was to guard our patches from curious and often well-meaning neighbor kids with an overwhelming urge to pick green heirloom tomatoes. That and finding homes for all the excess hot peppers and zucchini.

Now, you may ask, would I do it all again? Well, my optimistic side has me reading garden books and quietly making plans for next spring.

Interested in trying your luck at gardening next year? A few garden plots remain. Contact Jean Zimmerman in the SLP Municipal Service Center for information. (952) 924-2563