



Streetcar Steamboat *Minnehaha* Relaunch Update

June 2026

The Past: Steamboat *Minnehaha* and her five identical sisters were **built in 1906** by the Twin City Rapid Transit Company, linking Twin City streetcar routes to Lake Minnetonka. **Service ended in 1926** and *Minnehaha* and two of her sisters were scuttled in the lake off of Big Island. ***Minnehaha* was raised in 1980**, restored, and **returned to service as an excursion boat in 1996**.

In October 2019, *Minnehaha* lost access to a privately-owned commercial boat ramp for launching and hauling-out and was dry-docked in her Excelsior boat barn. She has been **carefully maintained** by dedicated volunteers, **added to the National Register of Historic Places**, and **underwent a hull restoration** funded by a \$104,000 grant provided by the State of MN from the Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund through the Minnesota Historical Society. Simultaneously, a **thorough search was conducted for a new launch ramp and storage facility site** that would meet *Minnehaha's* unique size and weight requirements.

The Present: LMHS has been exploring a **Three Rivers Park District site at Lake Minnetonka Regional Park** in Minnetrista as a possible solution. A site and engineering **feasibility study** has been completed by the Minneapolis engineering firm WSB and the site was found to be compatible with *Minnehaha's* needs for a new winter home and launch ramp.

Moving Forward: LMHS will launch a **capital campaign** to cover construction costs for the storage building, launch ramp, and an endowment fund. The project will require **approvals from multiple regulatory agencies** as well as formal **lease and site use agreements** with Three Rivers Park District. A **volunteer crew** will be recruited and during summer cruising seasons, passengers will

board *Minnehaha* at a **Lower Lake public dock** and **cruising routes** throughout the lake will be developed.

LMHS has been granted permission to use *Minnehaha's* original ramp one more time to send her on her way to her new home when it is completed. *IF* the site remains available it's expected that *Minnehaha* will be **back in service and fully operational on Lake Minnetonka as an excursion boat and floating museum by 2028. But time is of the essence.** If the original launch ramp becomes unavailable, a relaunch will be extremely difficult.

Help Us Re-Launch History!

Join the Lake Minnetonka Historical Society as a member to stay in the loop and to support our mission: *Telling the story of Lake Minnetonka by collecting, preserving and sharing its history.* LakeMinnetonkaHistory.org/membership.

Send a special contribution of any size to LakeMinnetonkaHistory.org/contribute to support the relaunch.

Use your time, talent and connections to return *Minnehaha* to active service. Volunteer at LakeMinnetonkaHistory.org/volunteer, or contact us at info@LakeMinnetonkaHistory.org, 952-474-2115.

Learn more at LakeMinnetonkaHistory.org and SteamboatMinnehaha.org.

