



2050 Vision Parks, Greenways, and Natural Systems

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Overview



1. Project Purpose and Process
2. 2050 Vision Framework
3. Public Review Process
4. Public Review Comments and Plan Changes
5. Questions and Discussion
6. Requested Action

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Purpose and Process



- Update 2030 Vision
- Update Goals and Strategies to guide parks department work over the next 25 years

Process

Spring – Fall 2024:
Research, Community Engagement

Fall 2024-Winter 2025:
Vision Framework and Develop Draft Plan

Spring 2025: *Public Review Draft Plan, Community Engagement*

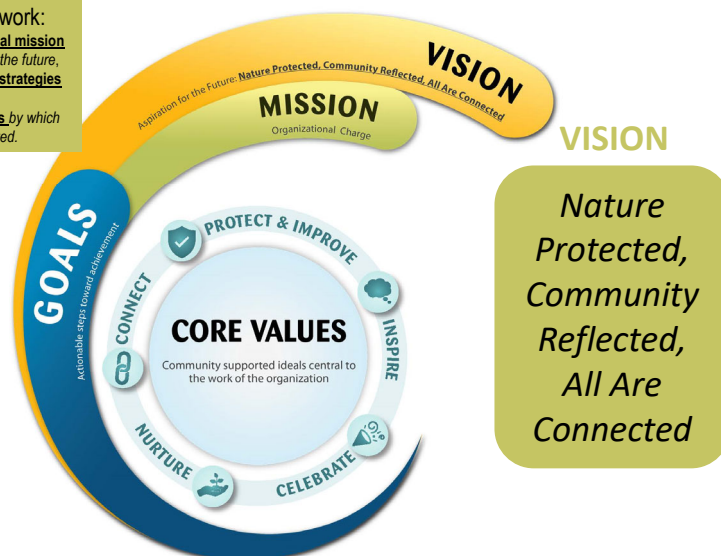
Spring - Summer 2025:
Final Plan and Approvals

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Vision Framework



The Vision Framework:
Supports the organizational mission by expressing a vision for the future, formulating the goals and strategies to achieve it, and articulating the core values by which the mission will be conducted.



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Goals

GOALS

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| <p>Goal A Nurture the reciprocal relationship between people and nature.</p> <p>Goal B Cultivate belonging by engaging and serving the community, with an emphasis on those who are under-represented in the outdoors.</p> <p>Goal C Provide safe and positive core services, amenities, and experiences.</p> <p>Goal D Create dynamic spaces with unique and memorable experiences.</p> <p>Goal E Expand environmental stewardship through outdoor programs, learning, and volunteerism.</p> | <p>Goal F Offer opportunities to improve physical, mental, and spiritual health.</p> <p>Goal G Strengthen partnerships with Tribal Nations and Indigenous communities for the protection of lands and traditions.</p> <p>Goal H Locate new park units close to people or to protect natural areas and recreational assets.</p> <p>Goal I Lead and support ecological stewardship and climate resilience.</p> <p>Goal J Protect, improve, and manage the natural resources of Dakota County.</p> | <p>Goal K Elevate cultural richness through arts, historic preservation, interpretation, and storytelling within the park system.</p> <p>Goal L Seek and sustain values-based and mission-driven partnerships.</p> <p>Goal M Care for the system through sustainable and innovative funding.</p> <p>Goal N Invest in a thriving parks workforce that represents the communities served.</p> <p>Goal O Support local and sustainable economic development.</p> |
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Public Review Process

April 22-May 20

- Community Open House
- Online review and questionnaire
- Pop-up events
- Stakeholder Meetings and Advisory Committee Meetings

Over 400 people were reached at in-person events, and 66 online survey responses were submitted.

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Public Review



Key Themes

- Be good stewards of the land
- Keep parks natural
- Focus on amenities
- Build for all ages
- Expand and maintain trails
- Take care of what we have

86% of online survey respondents strongly agree or agree with the plan vision.

"Do you feel that this vision and the supporting values will serve to improve the quality of life in Dakota County?" 64 respondents via the online survey

Figure 1: Chart of Plan Vision agreement



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Public Review



Five highest priority goals:

- J. Protect, improve, and manage the natural resources of Dakota County.
- A. Nurture the reciprocal relationship between people and nature.
- E. Expand environmental stewardship through outdoor programs, learning, and volunteerism.
- H. Locate new park units close to people or to protect natural areas and recreational assets.
- C. Provide safe and positive core services, amenities, and experiences.

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Public Review Findings and Residential Survey Alignment



- A. Nurture the reciprocal relationship between people and nature.
 - Residents ranked County Parks and recreation and Trail and Bikeway systems in the top three services provided by Dakota County.
- H. Locate new park units close to people or to protect natural areas and recreational assets.
 - 22% of residents report that they don't visit Dakota County parks or greenways more often because "Locations are inconvenient" and "Not easy to get there by bus, bike, or walking".
- J. Protect, improve, and manage the natural resources of Dakota County.
 - 81% of residents support investment in "Protecting and improving natural areas".
 - 81% of residents support investment in "Protecting and improving wildlife habitat".
 - 88% of residents support investment in "Protecting and improving water quality".

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Public Review Findings and Residential Survey Alignment



- C. Provide safe and positive core services, amenities, and experiences.
 - Dakota County's "Outdoor recreational opportunities" are rated "Much higher" in comparison to the benchmark.
 - Residents rating of feeling safe "While using Dakota County parks, trails and greenways" was at it lowest since 2004 (rated 75 out of 100 in 2025).
- E. Expand environmental stewardship through outdoor programs, learning, and volunteerism.
 - 70% of residents consider "Increasing public access for outdoor recreation" very important or essential.

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Plan Changes



- Accessibility content updated
- Greenway maps updated
- Clarification of strategies
- Updates, corrections, and omissions
- Community suggestions will be considered as tactics in the operational plan updates

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Questions and Discussion



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Requested Action



The Dakota County Board of Commissioners
adopt the 2050 Parks, Greenways and Natural
Systems Vision Plan.