



Dakota
forever wild
PARKS

DAKOTA COUNTY PARKS

2050 VISION PLAN

January 2025 Draft Vision Framework

TUĀL-LI
collaborative



VISION FRAMEWORK

CREATING A VISION FRAMEWORK

*Support the **organizational mission**
by expressing a **vision** for the future,
formulating the **goals** to achieve it,
and articulating the **core values**,
by which the mission will be conducted.*

It is around four elements (mission, vision, goals, and values) that the Vision Framework is constructed. The Vision Framework is intended to establish the basis for both the 2050 Vision Plan itself and the work of the organization in decades to come.

The following pages state the recommendation for each element.

NATURE PROTECTED, COMMUNITY REFLECTED, ALL ARE CONNECTED

MISSION
Organizational change

VISION
Aspiration for the future

GOALS
Actionable steps toward achievement



PROTECT & IMPROVE



INSPIRE

CORE VALUES

Community supported ideals central to the work of the organization



CONNECT



CELEBRATE



NURTURE

recommended **CORE VALUES**

Core Values are the community-supported ideals central to the work of the organization. They are the primary influencer in future direction and operational conduct.

1. To **CONNECT** people to each other and the natural world, fostering a sense of belonging for all.
2. To **Protect** and improve natural spaces, ensuring a resilient and healthy environment for future generations.
3. To **INSPIRE** wellbeing, wonder, adventure, and learning through engaging and inclusive outdoor experiences.
4. To **NURTURE** and heal the vital relationship between people and nature.
5. To **CELEBRATE** our vibrant and richly diverse communities.

existing **MISSION** statement

The Mission is what the organization is charged with carrying out.

Dakota County Parks' current mission statement is "Provide high quality recreational and educational opportunities in harmony with natural resource preservation and stewardship. In a separate and parallel process, the Parks Department will be updating their organizational mission to align with the updated values and vision.

*Provide high quality recreational and educational opportunities
in harmony with natural resource preservation and
stewardship.*

recommended **VISION** statement

The Vision statement is an aspiration for future state of being.

*Dakota County Parks and Natural Lands:
Nature Protected, Community Reflected, All Are Connected.*

recommended GOALS

Dakota County Parks will:

1. Nurture the reciprocal relationship between people and nature.

The park system recognizes people's place as a part of the natural world and ecological processes, and the crucial role people have in conserving and managing natural areas and natural features and attributes. Nature-based experiences in enhanced and diverse environments foster a reciprocal cycle of well-being and care.

2. Cultivate belonging by engaging and serving the whole community, with an emphasis on those that are under-represented in the outdoors.

Community members of all backgrounds, interests, and abilities are welcomed and included. People feel pride in their parks and a sense of responsibility in stewarding a renowned park system.

3. Provide core services and amenities at a level where people feel safe, have a positive experience, and become return visitors.

As a baseline to the broader recreational experience, visitors have confidence that Dakota County facilities will be clean, cared-for, and thoughtful to their needs.

4. Create dynamic spaces with signature recreation experiences.

The park system and programs set Dakota County apart and represents an urban and rural landscape thoughtfully knit together. Each place is a unique attraction with an abundance of fun experiences for all ages. The collection of parks, greenways, and natural lands offers a breadth of activities and experiences.

5. Expand environmental stewardship through outdoor programs, learning, and volunteerism.

The impact of parks and natural areas transcends physical boundaries by motivating actions by individuals in all parts of their lives. Community outreach and education bring programs to people who become lifelong advocates.

6. Offer opportunities to improve physical, mental, and spiritual health.

Parks provide core service to public health and can positively impact health through fun, active recreation, access to nature, equity, and social connection.

7. Strengthen partnerships with Tribal Nations and Indigenous communities to protect culturally significant lands and traditions within parks.

Respecting the significance of this land for Native Nations and people is evolving and action based. Indigenous culture, language, and people are thriving and visible within parks. Through partnership, the park system reinforces understanding and respect of Indigenous cultures by all people.

8. Locate new park units close to people or to protect natural areas and recreation assets.

Parks, greenways, and open space are at the heart of healthy and dynamic communities throughout the County. As the County grows and evolves, so will the park system.

9. Lead on ecological health and climate resilience.

Parks and conservation areas are reservoirs of biodiversity and are enhanced, creating a legacy of environmental strength for future generations. Dakota County Parks reaches beyond sustainability and is a leader in implementing solutions to climate change.

10. Elevate cultural richness through arts, historic preservation, and interpretation.

Dakota County collaborates with the community for arts, historic preservation, and interpretation, ensuring the system reflects the cultural diversity of the community. The system inspires cultural appreciation, and all people feel included and connected.

11. Seek values-based and mission-driven partnerships.

Effective teaming elevates our work and reach. We find optimal roles and maximize our effectiveness with partners to create an extensive network of environmental and community benefits.

12. Care for the system through sustainable and innovative funding.

The system operates efficiently and effectively supported by diverse revenue sources. Stable funding provides for consistent level of service and for the care of assets. Innovative funding is continually pursued to reach beyond the basics.

13. Invest in a diverse and thriving Parks Department workforce that represents the communities we serve.

Investment in people inspires energy and creativity that enriches the park system and boost confidence among constituents. A healthy and equitable work environment incentives cooperation across disciplines and departments.

14. Support sustainable economic development.

Parks contribute broader economic systems and contribute to making Dakota County a desirable place to live, work, and visit.