
3 Vision & Guiding Principles

Overview

The vision and guiding principles are the foundation of the Park, Trail and Open Space Plan and were developed with input from City staff, the Open Spaces Advisory Committee, and the public. The vision statement embodies the community's desires and intentions for its future park, trail, and open space system, creates a picture of what it should become and identifies its critical elements which are discussed in detail in Sections 4 and 5 of this plan. The guiding principles provide a means for guiding and evaluating future efforts and to achieve the plan's vision. The vision and guiding principles also form the foundations for park, trail, and open space system objectives and policies outlined in Section 4 of this plan.

Vision

Dayton is a vibrant, growing community with a strong conservation ethic that values its unique natural resources and cultural heritage. Dayton's lakes, rivers, creeks, wetland complexes, forests, woodlands and prairies together form the community's natural resource system. As the community experiences major population growth and land development, it is important that the city identify its significant natural resource, cultural and historic preservation areas in order to guide future development to the most appropriate locations. Protection of natural areas supports healthy habitats for wildlife and vegetation, preserves Dayton's natural and rural character, strengthens citizens' sense of community, and enhances the quality of the community's parks, trails and open space system.

Dayton's parks, trails and open space system will be a collection of interrelated elements that preserve natural areas and provide recreational opportunities. Specifically, a greenways open space system will enable strong connections between significant natural areas as well as recreation areas. Parks will provide a range of recreational opportunities, including community parks, small neighborhood parks, special use parks, public access to lakes/waterways, and natural and historic areas. A community-wide trails system will provide connections to parks, natural open spaces, cultural/historic sites, community destinations and trails of surrounding communities. Open spaces will preserve significant natural areas, cultural/historic areas, major viewsheds and the community's natural/rural character. Together, these elements will form a parks, trails and open space system that will be enjoyed by citizens today and long into the future, and will be a source of pride and identity for the citizens of Dayton.



Guiding Principles

1 Plan for a System of Unique Parks

Establishing a clear park system plan and its various recreational elements prior to major population growth and development will allow Dayton to guide development in a way that supports a strong park system rather than fitting a park system into the left over spaces between neighborhoods and will accommodate a range of desired activities.



2 Protect Significant Natural Resource Areas

Dayton's remaining natural resources are integral to its natural beauty and citizens' high quality of life. As the community grows and develops, the city is committed to identifying natural resource areas and pursuing preservation of natural areas through open space protection and conservation development tools.



3 Create a Greenways Open Space System

A greenways open space system connects significant natural resource areas within the City and to natural resources in adjacent communities in order to support healthy habitats for wildlife and vegetation, wildlife movement and species diversity. Greenways can also provide connections for people.



4 Preserve Major Viewsheds of Natural/Cultural Resources

Whenever feasible, major viewsheds of natural and cultural resource areas should be preserved as a way to visually preserve the community's natural and cultural heritage, particularly along waterways, lakes, woodlands and historic sites.



5 Integrate Trails and Parks into Greenways

Parks, trails and open space amenities do not stand on their own but need to be weaved into the community's pattern. A system of trails and parks connected to greenways provides more opportunities for citizens to access and enjoy the community's natural areas, as well as connections to cultural/historic destinations and adjacent communities.



6 Connect Open Space System to Cultural Heritage

Dayton has a rich cultural heritage, including Dayton Historic Village area, historic buildings, Native American sites and its agricultural heritage. A connected open space system should connect to the community's cultural/historic sites as well as to any new cultural or community destinations as a way to provide public access and celebrate the community's past, present and future heritage.



7 Design Open Space/Rural Character into New Developments

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New development should fit into the natural landscape, as much as possible, using tools such as open space design, residential cluster development, conservation easements and transfer of development rights.

8 Balance Open Space Protection with Landowner Interests

The protection of natural resources and open space needs to be balanced with individual landowners' interests. The city will work with landowners to identify the most effective protection tools for each situation through regular communication of city plans, education and incentive programs.

9 Forge Partnerships with Other Organizations

Collaboration with other organizations such as Hennepin County, Three Rivers Park District, the school district, athletic organizations, adjacent communities, and others will be essential in order to maximize resources and to achieve Dayton's desired park, trail and open space system.



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