

**Note:** Since the inception of the Comprehensive Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Plan, New Scandia Township has decided to pursue incorporation. Information herein is relevant to the community, regardless of whether it remains New Scandia Township or becomes the City of Scandia.  
- SWB, Inc., July 2006.

## CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

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### PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

Over a century ago, when the City of Minneapolis struggled with issues related to parks, trails and open space, H.W.S. Cleveland told the Park Commission:

*“Look forward for a century to the time when the city has a population of a million, and think what will be their wants. They will have wealth enough to purchase all that money can buy, but all that wealth cannot purchase a lost opportunity, or restore natural features of grandeur and beauty, which would then possess priceless value, and which you (the Park Commissioners) can preserve if you but say the word and save them from destruction which certainly awaits them if you fail to utter it.”<sup>1</sup>*

Much of the City’s exceptional park system would have been lost to private development or poor planning, had it not been for the wisdom and forethought of the Park Commission, government officials, and residents of that time.

This is the time for New Scandia Township (NST) to implement a comprehensive parks plan. Faced with growing development pressure, New Scandia Township is bound to change. This plan is intended to guide that change in a manner consistent with the Township’s vision of preserving its rural character and the quality of its open space and natural areas.

New Scandia Township’s Comprehensive Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Plan will help ensure that the Township knows what it has and that it has a strategy for preserving, enhancing, and developing its comprehensive park system so current and future generations may enjoy the recreation opportunities and open space that the Township has to offer.

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<sup>1</sup> Dan Armitage, “The Curling Water: A West Bank History”, The Minnesota Daily (September 27, 1973), p. 19

## PLANNING PROCESS

Washington County is one of the fastest growing counties in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region. Concerned with balancing development pressure while maintaining and preserving the area's natural and cultural significance, the New Scandia Township (NST) Town Board hired landscape architecture and planning consultant Sanders, Wacker, Bergly Inc., in the Fall of 2004 to work with the Park and Recreation Committee to update the comprehensive parks plan as a planning tool for the next ten to twenty years.

The New Scandia Township Park and Recreation Committee met with SWB Inc. on a monthly basis to review issues and opportunities specific to the current parks system. Significant ecological and demographic patterns in the Township were identified through GIS mapping and an inventory of existing facilities. A community survey, visioning workshop, two community open houses and stakeholder interviews provided a broad range of feedback from the community with regard to goals and priorities for the plan.

Community surveys were distributed to every household in New Scandia Township in December of 2004. Approximately thirty-nine percent (504 residents) of the total number of households in the Township responded to the survey. Well over half of New Scandia Township respondents identified the importance of open space and recreation to their quality of life, and emphasized the need to preserve the rural small town character of Scandia. For further information, please see Appendix B: 2004 New Scandia Township Community Survey.

The visioning workshop and community open houses identified the need for additional recreation facilities to meet the demands of the Township's growing population and special areas that should be preserved for future generations.

Coordination with the MN Department of Natural Resources and Washington County, among others, provided a framework for the park plan to complement and build on the strengths of the region, while serving the needs of the Township's residents.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing to review the draft Comprehensive Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Plan, which was formally adopted by the Town Board on July 18, 2006.



*Community Open House, January 2005*

## PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The goal of the Comprehensive Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Plan is to help the community develop and maintain a system that meets the needs and desires of current *and* future residents of New Scandia Township. The Plan expresses a long-range vision that can serve the Township through the year 2025, but it also provides specific goals and strategies that address current issues. The Plan has set the following objectives to realize this goal:

***“I am very concerned about how fast our rural area is becoming developed. Once it’s gone, it’s gone forever. If I wanted to live in [a typical suburb], I would have moved there instead.”***

-Response from 2004  
Community Survey

1. Research demographic data to determine how existing and future population characteristics may affect New Scandia Township’s parks and trails system. Analyze recreation trends and standards. Determine recreation needs and develop a vision to help guide the Township in the development of its park, trail, open space, and recreation system (see Chapter 2: Recreation Needs, Issues, the Community Survey and Vision Statement).
2. PARKS: Analyze existing facilities, set goals and strategies and prepare a Park System Plan to guide park development (see Chapter 3: Park System Plan).
3. TRAILS: Analyze existing trails, set goals and strategies and prepare a Trail System Plan to guide trail development (see Chapter 4: Trail System Plan).
4. OPEN SPACE: Analyze existing open space, set goals and strategies and prepare an Open Space Plan to guide the acquisition and protection of open space in the Township (see Chapter 5: Open Space Plan).
5. RECREATION FACILITIES: Analyze existing recreation facilities, set goals and strategies and prepare a Recreation Facilities Plan to guide the development of recreation facilities (see Chapter 6: Recreation Facilities Plan).
6. RECREATION PROGRAMS: Analyze existing recreation programs, set goals and strategies and prepare a Recreation Programs Plan to guide the development of recreation programs (see Chapter 7: Recreation Programs Plan).
7. Prepare implementation recommendations to help the Township prioritize and fund recommendations (see Chapter 8: Implementation).

## USE OF THE PLAN

This plan will be beneficial to many people:

1. Elected officials, the Park and Recreation committee and Township Staff can use this plan to assist them with a variety of tasks including acquisition, development, use, and maintenance of Township parks, trails, open space and recreation facilities and programs.
2. Other governmental agencies (federal, state, county, regional cities and towns) can refer to this plan to help determine how their parks, trails, open space and recreation facilities and programs may relate to New Scandia Township's system.
3. Clubs, associations, and special interest groups can use this plan to determine how they might work with and complement the Township's parks, trails, open space and recreation facilities and programs.
4. Developers and private landowners can use this plan to develop an understanding of how existing and future development might relate to the Township's parks, trails, open space and recreation facilities and programs.
5. Residents can refer to this plan to learn about parks, trails, open space and recreation facilities and programs in the township.

The Comprehensive Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation Plan provides a broad vision and an overall framework for New Scandia Township, including inventory, analysis and conceptual park master plans for individual sites. Bibliography and Resources, respectively, are included at the back of the Plan for additional reference. Additional park master planning and design development may be prepared as land becomes available for inclusion into the park system and as funding is available. This Plan is a dynamic plan that the Township should review and refine as it continues to grow and develop. As the community evolves, New Scandia Township should consider a thorough update of this plan by the year 2025, or earlier, as may be warranted by change or the Township.