



Veterans Park

CHAPTER 3

PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES



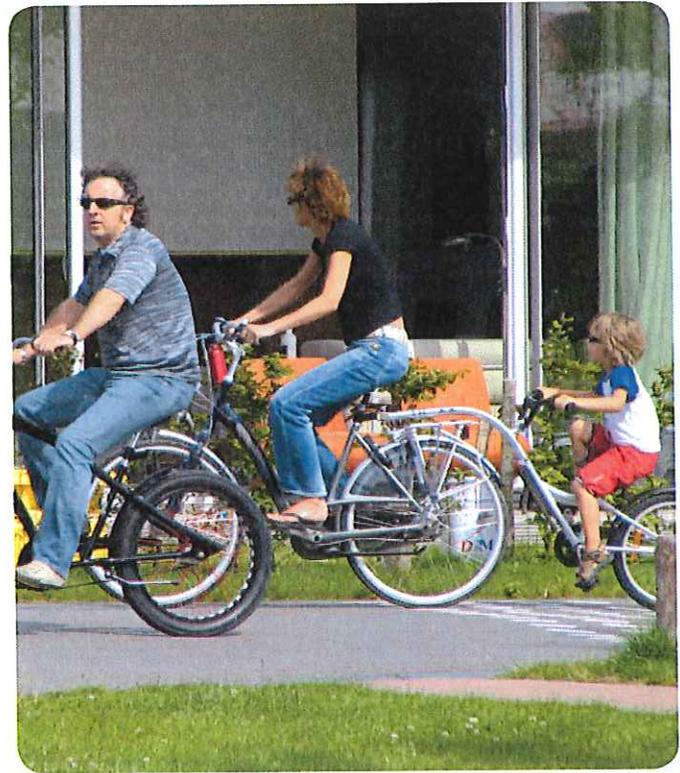
The La Crescent Park and Recreation Plan is guided by a set of principles and objectives. The principles used in the plan are drawn from those endorsed by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). They include: public parks, health and wellness, environmental stewardship, children and nature, and transportation and livable communities. Collectively, the principles and objectives are meant to serve as a guide to the content of this plan as well as serve as a checklist to help La Crescent become an even healthier, more connected community.

PRINCIPAL #1 - PUBLIC PARKS

Providing park and recreation opportunities is an essential public service of the City of La Crescent.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1.1 Develop a park system and open space plan which compliments the development pattern of the City of La Crescent.
- 1.2 Provide a balanced park system which includes neighborhood parks, community parks, special use facilities and schools, all interconnected by a trail network.
- 1.3 Encourage citizen participation in the planning and development of park and open space facilities.
- 1.4 Operate and maintain park facilities and programs in a fiscally responsible manner utilizing all potential funding sources for park operations, maintenance, acquisition, and facility development.
- 1.5 Continue to seek assistance from community groups in the planning and development of parks and recreation areas.
- 1.6 Encourage a cooperative effort between the La Crescent-Hokah School District and the City in the acquisition, development and usage of recreational facilities.



- 1.7 Provide convenient recreation opportunities within neighborhood areas by providing neighborhood park facilities and improving access to existing facilities where necessary.
- 1.8 Provide a blend of active and passive parks and open spaces.
- 1.9 Create a network of interconnected, multipurpose non-motorized trails for walking, hiking, cycling, and to promote connectivity between parks, neighborhoods and public amenities.
- 1.10 Ensure adequate funding for ongoing maintenance and rehabilitation of existing parks and recreation facilities.
- 1.11 Ensure that upgrades to park and recreation facilities promote efficient and cost-effective maintenance practices.
- 1.12 Provide a wide range of year-round recreational opportunities.
- 1.13 Install secure bicycle parking at all commercial and institutional facilities.
- 1.14 Periodically evaluate existing recreation programs including an assessment of attendance and customer satisfaction.
- 1.15 Enhance access to the Mississippi River for both active and passive recreational opportunities.

PRINCIPAL #2 - HEALTH AND WELLNESS FOR ALL PEOPLE OF ALL ABILITIES

Providing active recreation opportunities is critical to the health and wellness of each La Crescent resident and the community as a whole.

OBJECTIVES:

- 2.1 Provide park and open space facilities that emphasize accessibility.
- 2.2 Trail planning and design should take into account the needs of seniors and those with disabilities, particularly in areas near senior housing and special needs housing.
- 2.3 Continue to improve and upgrade the La Crescent park system to keep pace with the changing needs of the community.
- 2.4 Provide recreation facilities and programs that are available to all residents, including people of all ages, abilities, ethnic backgrounds, and income levels.
- 2.5 Encourage the establishment of community gardens in suitable parks sites and other publicly owned land.



PRINCIPAL #3 - ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY

Parks and outdoor recreation lands are an essential green infrastructure element of the City of La Crescent. Parks and public recreation lands are carbon-reducing landscapes that help clean the air and water, recharge aquifers, and reduce stormwater runoff.

- 3.1 Protect the scenic beauty and natural resources in La Crescent by creating a system of parks, open spaces and trails that respect natural terrain, preserve native vegetation, and take advantage of views.
- 3.2 Provide open space areas that assist in the conservation and protection of ecologically sensitive areas.
- 3.3 Coordinate local efforts with other public agencies and private partners to protect valuable natural resources and sensitive lands through donations, procurement of easements, acquisitions, and purchase of development rights and make such lands available for passive recreation where appropriate.
- 3.4 Manage vegetation in natural areas by removing and controlling non-native, invasive species and maintaining native plant species.
- 3.5 Increase understanding and appreciation of the cultural, natural and historical resources of the community and the area through expansion of the walking tour programs and interpretive signage.

PRINCIPAL #4 - CHILDREN AND NATURE

Improving children's access to parks and nature is priority of the City of La Crescent. Public parks and recreation are vital to the effort to provide safe, healthy ways to explore nature and enhance environmental education.

- 4.1 Trail and sidewalk planning should take into account the specific needs of children, particularly in areas near parks and schools.
- 4.2 Continue to coordinate efforts with La Crescent-Hokah Schools and Church of the Crucifixion to develop and implement safe walking routes, access to school bus stops, and pedestrian connections to and through school properties.
- 4.3 Collaborate with local service clubs to provide clinics to teach safe cycling to school age children.



PRINCIPAL #5 - TRANSPORTATION AND LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

La Crescent places a high priority on encouraging walking, biking, and the development of alternative transportation networks that will create a more livable and healthy community.

- 5.1 Design residential, commercial and industrial developments that include connections, both pedestrian, bike and vehicular, to adjoining developments to promote health and reduce personal automobile trips.
- 5.2 Promote livability by making transportation decisions based upon prioritizing the needs of people: 1) design transportation improvements that protect and serve pedestrians, 2) consider the needs of those who use public transportation and non-motorized transportation, and 3) consider the needs of automobile users.
- 5.3 Adopt a complete streets policy that encourages the City and the County to consider all users needed when reconstructing existing roadways or constructing new roads.
- 5.4 Link pedestrian and bike trails to open space features, to local community parks and to trail systems of adjacent jurisdictions.
- 5.5 Provide pedestrian and bicycle linkages between major points of interest where features such as major roadways and topography act as barriers to prevent safe and convenient connectivity.
- 5.6 Key intersections should include well-marked or textured crosswalks, central pedestrian refuges, curb extensions, pedestrian and bicyclist signal articulators, signs or other devices to improve safety.



John S. Harris Park