

Section 1

Administration and Coordination

Perhaps the most critical component of any plan is the part that describes implementation, the administration and coordination of making the ideas happen. Yet, because of the number of private and public interests involved in managing recreation and open space resources, successful implementation of plans is difficult to accomplish. The purpose of this section is to provide the reader with an outline of the administrative and coordinative steps important to the successful implementation of this Plan.

A. Administrative Recommendations

Form and Maintain a Citizen Advisory Board on Recreation and Open Space

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and the interested citizens who attended the committee meetings have together helped guide the recreational planning process and the content of this Plan. As such, they have been instrumental in shaping the County's first recreation and open space plan.

Based on this experience, it is recommended that a citizen-based group, the **Todd County Citizens' Advisory Board for Parks, Open Space and Trails**, be formed to advise the County Board of Commissioners on recreational matters and to support the implementation of this Plan. For purposes of initial discussion purposes, this group could be referred to as the Citizens Advisory Board (CAB). The groups should be volunteer-based and meet in the evenings to facilitate broader attendance.

The County Board of Commissioners should appoint the members to the CAB. It should be locally based and be composed of private citizens, landowners, business owners, recreational organizations, representatives from cities and townships and other persons familiar with and interested in promoting safe and effective recreational opportunities in the County. County and agency staff should provide technical assistance but not serve on the CAB. It is recommended that the CAB consist of two at-large members from each commissioner district as assigned by each commissioner and two commissioners for a total of twelve members.

The CAB should meet at least quarterly to review plan implementation progress and identify emerging problems and opportunities, maintain lines of communication between local institutions and agencies, and provide a coordinating function for plan implementation. The CAB should also be responsible for presenting an annual report to the Planning Commission, Board of Adjustment, and County Board of Commissioners on the status of plan implementation efforts.

Form and Maintain the Friends of Todd County

To support the implementation of this Plan, it is recommended that a local non-profit volunteer organization, Friends of Todd County be formed. The **purpose** of this group would be threefold: **1)** to provide the County with greater opportunities to leverage outside funding resources for both public and private recreational opportunities, **2)** to support information sharing and education efforts on recreation and open space topics, and **3)** to encourage more involvement by individuals and local organizations in the County in implementing this Plan. This group should create a library of information on technical and financial resources to assist local groups in the County connect with the appropriate agencies and organizations.

Section 2 of Volume 3 provides an overview of the wide range of funding sources available for recreation and open space projects and programs. Whereas, some funding sources require a local government’s involvement, many others prefer or require that a non-profit organization oversee the community project. This group could provide the County with increased fundraising potentials.

This organization should have broad representation from locally based key stakeholder groups, many of which participated in the recreational planning process. The details of the role and authorities of the Friends organization will need further discussion and development.

B. Coordination Recommendations

County’s Roles

The County should take a **leading role** in **coordinating** the implementation of this Plan. Given the broad scope of goals, objectives and actions, the County recognizes that there will need to be significant involvement by landowners and civic groups; recreational and conservation organizations; cities, townships and school districts; state and federal agencies; and other interested players.

The County’s first step in this coordination role should be to build local support and involvement on the projects listed in Volume 2. As it needs technical and financial assistance, it should seek the appropriate agencies and organizations such as the MN DNR Division of Trails and Waterways or other agency and seek their assistance.

The County has initiated its **coordination role** in the development of this Plan. It has also started to begin working in a **facilitation role** by convening groups in the Osakis area to begin work on upgrading Battle Point Park and a trail system around Lake Osakis. The following provides further description of the County’s roles in coordination:

Building Partnerships and Intergovernmental Coordination

To effectively implement this Plan, the County should maintain and enhance the following four partnership/intergovernmental coordination initiatives:

Maintain and Enhance Working Relationships with Landowners Groups and Recreation Organizations

The Drumlin Hills Coalition, Todd Area Trails Snowmobile Association, Osakis Sportsmen, Osakis Onward, and Osakis Lake Association were actively involved in the County's recreational planning process. For example, the Drumlin Hills Coalition was one of the sponsors of the first landowner workshop. The snowmobile association and the local Pheasants Forever chapter set display booths at the workshops. The Osakis area groups have initiated the first park improvement project resulting from this planning process.

These organizations have already played critically important roles in implementing this Plan. It is recommended that the County continue to work closely with these groups and other civic, lake associations, tourism and chambers of commerce, economic development committees, and conservation organizations to implement the goals and objectives in this Plan.

Maintain Cooperative Working Relationships with Cities, Townships and School Districts

In developing recreational opportunities and protecting open space, the 11 cities and 28 townships have many of the same powers and authorities granted to them by the state as does the County (planning, zoning, subdivision regulations, financing, land acquisition, etc.)

It is recommended that the County work closely with the cities and townships through these overlapping authorities vested by the State to more effectively implement this Plan as a means to improve the overall quality of life. The County should notify the townships and cities at the beginning of the project development process. It is also recommended that the County work with the 13 school districts to provide recreational opportunities and facilities to the public. The use of school district facilities needs to respect the operations of the school programs and functions. The CAC recommends that the County and local groups work with the school districts in the shared use of recreational facilities.

Maintain Collaborative Partnerships with Regional, State and Federal Agencies

Todd County recognizes that there are a large number of regional, state and federal agencies with expertise and resources available for assistance in implementing the outdoor recreation and open space projects and programs. The CAC recommends that the County continue to develop and maintain effective cooperative agreements with regional, state and federal agencies.

State and federal agency involvement is critical for the successful completion of a number of action items identified in this Plan. Todd County recognizes that the costs and expertise required to implement the projects and actions identified in this Plan are beyond the financial resources of the County.

To effectively implement this Plan, the County and its local partners should take the lead in identifying the areas of technical assistance and expertise it needs from the state and federal organizations for recreation and open space projects and then request that from the appropriate agencies.

The CAC recommends that the County maintain ongoing working relationships with state and federal agencies. Some of the major state agencies include; the Department of Natural Resources, Department of Transportation, Board of Water and Soil Resources, and the Department of Agriculture.

Maintain Collaborative Partnerships with Foundations and Non Profit Organizations

Support from the Blandin Foundation has been instrumental in the development of the recreational opportunities process in Todd County and in the preparation of this Plan. Funding support for the process came primarily through the Blandin Foundation Community Investment Partnership program.

Support for this planning process also came from two other foundations including The Conservation Fund on behalf of the Kodak American Greenways Award and the Initiative Foundation in Little Falls, Minnesota. Grants from these two foundations were critical to the public involvement process.

It is recommended that the County maintain and enhance its relationships with its foundation sponsors.

Integration with Other Efforts

Minnesota Forest Resources Council Landscape Program

In 1995, the Minnesota State Legislature enacted the Sustainable Forest Resources Act. This legislation established the Minnesota Forest Resources Council (MFRC) and formalized the state's commitment to promote sustainable forestry through the following:

- Consider and incorporate a broad array of efforts to manage, use and protect forest resources in the state in a sustainable manner to achieve the state's economic, environmental and social goals.
- Encourage cooperation and collaboration between public and private sectors in forest resource management.
- Recognize and consider forest resource issues, concerns and impacts at the site and landscape levels.

The MFRC established the Landscape Program as one its primary ways to accomplish its commitment to promoting sustainable forestry. Through this program, a plan has been prepared for each of the six forested regions or “landscapes” in the state. Todd County is located in the West Central Landscape. (For more information about the MFRC, please see www.frc.state.mn.us.)

The landscape planning process is a voluntary consensus based approach that brings together stakeholders that have an interest in forest resources. A regional committee has been formed to develop the landscape plans and to oversee their coordination and implementation. The West Central Landscape Committee has proposed to work with Todd and Wadena counties to develop a workshop to inform landowners and local officials about managing natural resources and open space as a part of their mission to promote sustainable forestry. The first workshop is scheduled for the spring of 2006. Additional workshops and other information sharing events are also being considered but will require local involvement.

It is recommended that the County work with the West Central Landscape Committee and the MFRC and Wadena County to support the workshop and other educational efforts.

Mapping and Research Projects

As described in Section 2 of Volume 1, a significant amount of data and mapping has been prepared for this planning process. The maps and data were used throughout the recreational planning process to help participants better understand the context of the issues and policies they were considering.

In addition to the work for this project, the Todd County GIS and Land Services Department has developed a number of related GIS data and mapping development projects. Having one of the finest county level GIS departments in the state, Todd County has been able to secure significant amounts of outside funding to pursue these projects. The information will help landowners and local officials find ways to address a broad range of issues and concerns. It is recommended that the County continue to incorporate and share information and knowledge from the research efforts. The following is a brief list of studies underway or completed:

- Agricultural Land Preservation Study.
- Digital Soil Survey.
- Geologic Atlas.
- County Biological Survey.

(This page had intentionally been left blank.)