

# SECTION 6 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN & ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

## OVERVIEW

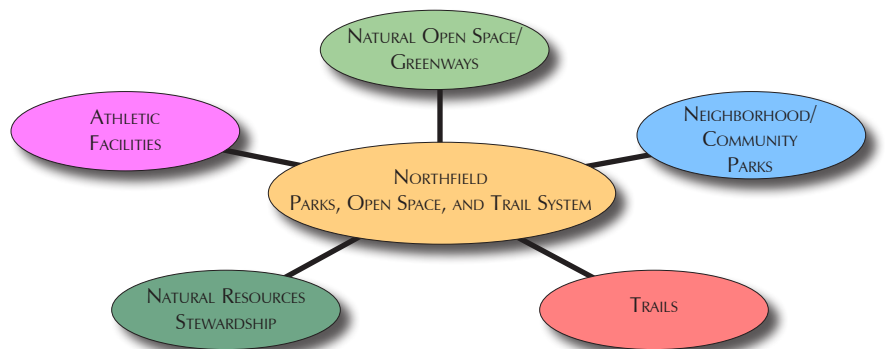
The system plan establishes an overall vision for the community that is ambitious yet realistic if incrementally implemented. This section sets forth an overall implementation strategy and establishes baseline priorities to guide that process.

### THE CITY AT A THRESHOLD POINT

Within the next decade, growth in Northfield will likely continue at a steady, yet manageable pace, bringing along with it new demands for parks, open spaces, athletic facilities, and trails. Thoughtful and prudent implementation of the system plan will be critical to being successful in meeting needs in a fiscally responsible and balanced manner. By taking an assertive role in managing implementation of the plan in sync with community development, the City can gain greater assurance that the quality of life values held by residents will be realized in the future. Success in this regard will require insightful leadership and a willingness to use a variety of approaches to managing development and leveraging financial resources (public and private) to achieve desired public values.

## A BALANCED APPROACH TO IMPLEMENTATION

As defined in *Section 2 – Vision Statement and Policy Plan*, a key principle of the plan is taking a balanced approach to implementation to ensure that multiple community values are being realized and that the wide-ranging interests of residents are well served as time goes on. A balanced approach also provides the City more latitude in taking advantage of opportunities as they arise. As the following graphic illustrates, the system plan consists of five implementation categories, each having its own set of priorities.



An overall implementation strategy and set of priorities for each of these components is defined in this section.

## A DISCIPLINED APPROACH TO SYSTEM INVESTMENTS

An important consideration in developing an implementation strategy is that the opportunities to enhance the system are quite substantial and diverse. The magnitude of potential investment to achieve full plan implementation will undoubtedly require setting priorities that respond to realistic limitations of resources.

The temptation to spread investment dollars too thinly across the entire system is also a major implementation consideration. Unfortunately, this strategy often falls short in that limited improvements do not have a major effect on the public's perception that the quality of the system has improved. This often leaves residents with a sense of unmet expectations, which can result in a *decrease* in the perceived value of the system, rather than an enhancement.

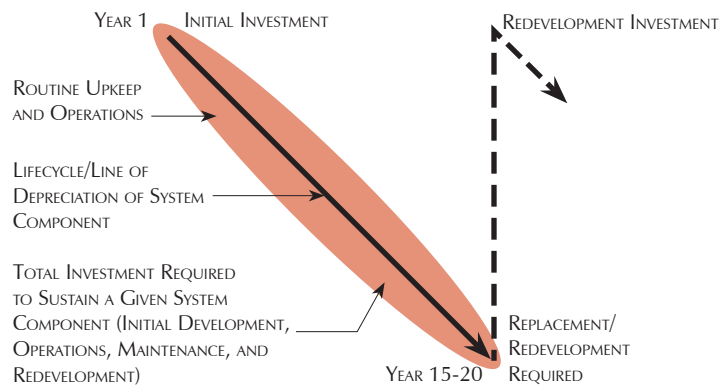
By focusing on raising the level of service through strategic and prioritized investments, the role that the system plays as a defining element in the City's infrastructure can be strengthened.

## LONG-TERM COMMITMENT TO A SUSTAINABLE SYSTEM

A sustainable system is the point to which the community is willing to support implementing the system plan to receive desired public benefits. Benefits relate to cultural (personal and social), ecological, and economic values that individual residents and the larger community find important and are willing to support by making investments in the system.

To be sustainable, implementation of the plan must take into account the long-term commitments required to develop, operate and maintain, and ultimately replace each aspect of the system as it moves through its lifecycle. Figure 6.1 illustrates this important point.

FIGURE 6.1 – LIFECYCLE COSTS AND LONG-TERM COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINING EACH SYSTEM COMPONENT



As illustrated, the total investment required to sustain a given component of the system is the *cumulative* cost for initial development, routine operations and maintenance costs, and redevelopment once a given park or trail reaches the end of its useful lifecycle. Given the major implications to long-term funding, the City should define the level of service it can indefinitely sustain at the point of initial implementation.

## PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR SYSTEM INITIATIVES

The following table outlines general criteria for prioritizing plan implementation. The criteria are broad enough to encompass the predominant factors in the decision process, yet limited enough to be manageable for decision makers to gain consensus and take action.

## CRITERIA FOR PRIORITIZING PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Evaluation Criteria	Criteria Description
<b>Community Demand</b>	Action is warranted due to identified community demand based on needs assessment studies and defined trends.
<b>Recreation Program Need</b>	Action is warranted based on current and projected city and local associations' recreation program facility demands.
<b>Redevelopment/ Upgrading of Facility</b>	Action is warranted due to facility being: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In an unsafe condition or of poor quality</li> <li>• Old and at the end of its useful lifecycle</li> <li>• Ineffective at servicing current needs</li> </ul>
<b>Development Patterns and Population Density</b>	Action is warranted to service the needs of an area based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current and projected residential development patterns</li> <li>• Current and projected population and demographic profiles</li> </ul>
<b>Funding Availability/ Partnership Opportunity</b>	Action is warranted due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding availability for specific use</li> <li>• Partnership opportunity for specific type of development</li> </ul>
<b>Preservation of Significant Natural Resources</b>	Action is warranted to preserve and/or enhance significant natural resources in the city.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES

The strategy for implementing the system plan and establishing priorities is underpinned by two objectives:

1. Developing a balanced system offering multiple community values
2. Taking advantage of opportunities as they arise

At times, these objectives will be in conflict in that opportunities to develop various aspects of the system will present themselves in an unbalanced, "out-of-order" manner. As such, the implementation of the plan inherently requires some degree of flexibility to respond to opportunities as they arise. The PRAB and City Council will have to consider these issues as they occur and determine the best course of action, which could include a rethinking or departure from the stated priorities.

### IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES BETWEEN SYSTEM CATEGORIES

The following table establishes priorities between categories and the underlying rationale for one priority over another. Note that this is not absolute, which means that if an opportunity to implement a lower priority presents itself, the City should take advantage of it before the opportunity is lost.

## IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES BETWEEN CATEGORIES

Priority	Category	Overall Priority Statement
1	<b>Relationship with School District</b>	The interdependency of the park, open space, and trail system and recreational programming between Northfield and the School District is vital to effectively and efficiently meeting local needs. Ensuring that this is accomplished in a fair and equitable manner is critical to long-term success. As such, periodic evaluation of the relationship and updating formal agreements is an ongoing priority.
2	<b>Open Space and Greenways</b>	Setting aside lands for open space and greenways is a top priority because it is intrinsically linked to community development. Setting aside this land must occur as part of that process if it is to occur at all. Following through on the system plan will also require a close working relationship with St. Olaf and Carleton Colleges to establish greenway corridors across their properties.
	<b>Trails</b>	The implementation of many of the highest-value trails is also intrinsically linked to community development, especially the destination trails that traverse through the proposed greenway system in future areas of annexation. Given its routine rating as the highest value recreational activity by people across age groups, developing the trail system is justifiably a very high priority within the city. As with the greenways, most of the destination trails need to be established as part of the development process, as well as establishing easements across St. Olaf and Carleton Colleges properties.
3	<b>Parks</b>	Continued development of the park system remains important to serving traditional recreational needs. This falls slightly behind the other priorities larger due to the importance of taking advantage of opportunities as development occurs. Further, upgrading the neighborhood and community parks is linked to local funding commitments, which will have to be balanced against other community funding needs.
4	<b>Athletic Facilities</b>	Athletic facilities are listed a bit lower in terms of priority due to the relative balance between supply and demand. Although continued enhancement of existing facilities and adding new ones as defined in Section 3 is a priority, this can occur over time as demands warrant and funding packages materialize.
5	<b>Natural Resources Stewardship</b>	With the ever increasing value that society places on preservation of remaining natural areas, establishing a stewardship program will become an increasingly significant priority. It is rated lower at this point due to the other priorities and the fact that much of this relates to lands that have yet to be set aside as future open space and greenways, which will occur as development pushes out into surrounding area.

Also refer to **Appendix A – Park and Trail Development Considerations** for general development cost considerations for parks, trails, and stewardship of natural areas.

The following defines the implementation strategy and priorities associated with each to the categories listed in the above table.

#### IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR ENHANCING THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Northfield and School District each play a vital role in the success of the system plan. Whereas this partnership offers many benefits, it also requires diligence in terms of defining responsibilities and commitments to fairly and equitably implementing the plan over time. Key action steps include:

1. Preparing or updating existing formal agreements related to planning, land acquisition, development, operations, and maintenance of joint use facilities involving Northfield and School District; this is especially important with respect to athletic facilities
2. Preparing or updating existing formal agreements related to recreation programs serving Northfield residents; this will also involve the School District and local associations as providers of recreational programs and services
3. Formalizing the coordination between Northfield, School District, and local associations on tracking registration and participation in recreational programs; this includes the use of a common scheduling system to ensure the efficient use of recreational facilities

### IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR PRESERVING OPEN SPACE AND GREENWAYS

Implementing the open space and greenway plan will require the use of a variety of strategies as defined in *Section 3 – Parks, Athletic Facilities, and Open Space Plan*. The most important of these is greater reliance on a collaborative approach to land development where public open space, trails, and park amenities can be more fully integrated into private developments.

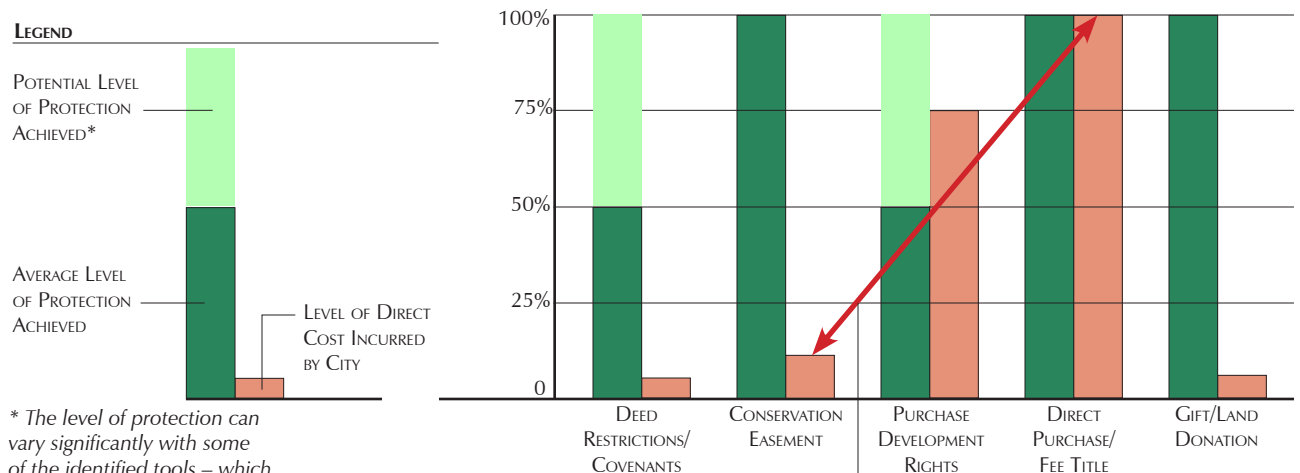
The use of alternative strategies defined in Section 3 are relatively straightforward but also represent a significant departure from traditional land development practices. Making this transition will require a good-faith partnership between the City, landowners, and developers – along with a willingness by all parties to be flexible. Following are key action steps to enhance the confidence of each party with this approach:

1. Develop a prototype process for public values-based or conservation development approaches through a hands-on working collaboration between the City and developers for select development parcels.
2. Formalize the use of alternative approaches as part of the City’s tools for managing development; this includes updating the Comprehensive Plan and zoning, subdivision, and platting ordinances to reflect these approaches.

The importance of thinking differently about managing development cannot be overstated. Lacking the flexibility that the aforementioned alternative approaches provide both the City and the developer, implementing the open space system plan to its fullest potential becomes much more uncertain, if not unrealistic.

One of the key values of the alternative approach is that it allows the mixing and matching of strategies for protecting and managing natural resources, as defined in Section 3. Figure 6.2 illustrates the cost-benefit to the City associated with a number of these strategies.

FIGURE 6.2 – LIFECYCLE COSTS AND LONG-TERM COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINING EACH SYSTEM COMPONENT



\* The level of protection can vary significantly with some of the identified tools – which underscores the importance of selecting the most predictable tool whenever possible to ensure long-term protection of the resource.

*In Northfield, direct purchase of land for greenways and natural open spaces to the extent envisioned under the system plan will likely be cost prohibitive, especially as land values continue to escalate. Therefore, the use of other lower direct-cost tools such as conservation easements will be imperative if the City is to achieve its vision.*

As the graphic illustrates, gifted or donated land offers the highest cost-benefit to the City. However, this cannot be relied upon as the primary tool for setting aside open space since most decisions on land uses will be driven by economics. Second to this, conservation easements offer the greatest cost-benefit to the City under the assumption that perpetual easements can be negotiated with a landowner or developer during the development process. Stringent attention to the details of the conservation easement is also critical to ensuring long-term protection of the resource.

Deed restrictions are also a low cost alternative, but the level of protection is at the discretion of the landowner, which can change from year to year. Direct purchase is also an option for full protection, but carries with it the highest direct cost to the City of any of the options.

One of the strengths of the alternative approach to development is that it leverages the economies of the development itself to fund desirable public values, such as conservation easements. In other words, this approach works toward the greatest level of open space protection (and other public values, such as trails) with the least amount of direct City capitalization.

With respect to **St. Olaf and Carleton Colleges**, the main implementation goal with respect to greenways is to maintain an open working relationship to ensure consistency between land use decisions, approaches to land preservation, and provisions for public access via trails (shared-use paved and nature trails) in select locations through formal and informal agreements. Other than a trail easement for paved trails, there is no need for either of the colleges to set aside land in a formal conservation easement if that land is to remain undeveloped open space under their own land use plans and/or policies. However, should either college decide to sell off or otherwise develop their property, then the same strategy to set aside greenways through other privately-held lands apply.

#### IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR TRAILS

The implementation strategy for greenway-based destination trails parallels that which is recommended for the greenway system. Specifically, these trails should be considered one of the public values being sought as part of the development process. As with greenways, the City will need to collaborate with developers to leverage the economies of each development to help fund these trails. Direct public funding may also play a role in implementing the greenway-based trails consistent with its standard trail development policies.

With respect to destination trails traversing **St. Olaf and Carleton Colleges**, the main implementation strategy is negotiating a formal trail easement following the conceptual route defined on the **System Plan** wide enough for the trail and routine maintenance (20-foot minimum, as defined in Section 4).

The strategy for other trails within the system will be consistent with past practices of prioritizing and developing trails in line with available resources. The City should establish a five-year trail program that defines key priorities. Trails that serve the greatest public good in terms of recreational, transportation, and safety values will be the highest priorities. (Refer to *Appendix A – Park and Trail Development Considerations*.)

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR PARKS

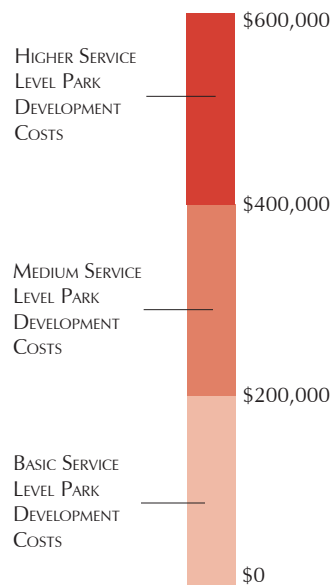
Based on the limited funding available from outside sources, implementing the neighborhood and community park system plan in the near term will continue to rely on traditional funding sources (i.e., park dedication fund and, at the discretion of the City Council, CIP or referendum funding.) Under this scenario, development of individual parks will continue on a priority basis consistent with past practices and available funding. Under a limited funding scenario, being disciplined to funding key parks first will put the City in the strongest position to meet the basic recreational needs of the community.

In the longer term, the City should continue to monitor citizen support for alternative funding programs (i.e., referendum).

Key action steps for developing the park system include:

1. Establish an initial five-year park improvement program specifically focusing on neighborhood and community parks as defined under the system plan. This should include a determination of desired service levels throughout the system, as figure 6.3 considers. The program should be consistent with anticipated funding levels. (Refer to *Appendix A – Park and Trail Development Considerations*.)
2. Prepare a master plan for priority parks consistent with the five-year park improvement program. This should include a development cost estimate and listing of priorities for each park.
3. Undertake park improvement projects consistent with funding availability and set priorities.

FIGURE 6.3 – POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT COSTS FOR PARKS



*The potential development cost for a neighborhood-level park is highly variable and depends on the service level desired by the community. Basic service levels are most common in small communities with limited population and tax base to fund development. A community like Northfield typically falls into the medium service level, with \$200,000 to \$300,000 being common general budgets for new neighborhood parks. Higher service levels are typically in urban or suburban areas where population density is higher, as are expectations for park and recreation services.*

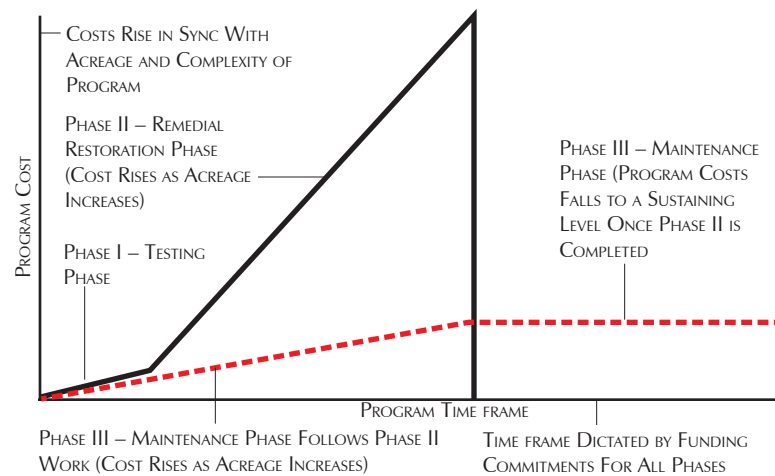
## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR NATURAL RESOURCES STEWARDSHIP

Developing and implementing a natural resources stewardship program is also an important priority. As defined in *Section 5 – Natural Resources Stewardship Plan*, a formal program will be needed as open spaces are preserved if the long-term health of the natural systems within these areas are to be assured. This is particularly important in that stewardship is a long-term endeavor where results from near-term actions (or the lack of action) will be most evident years into the future.

The action steps defined in Section 5 outline the specific strategy for developing this program. The most critical factor in this endeavor is securing a *perpetual* funding source. Lacking this, gains made during initial phases of the program can be easily lost if not followed by continued investment in management in future years.

The funding requirements for each phase of stewardship varies considerably. Figure 6.4 provides an overview of how the three phases relate to each other in terms of funding levels.

FIGURE 6.4 – SHIFTS IN FUNDING LEVELS TO SUPPORT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM



As the graphic illustrates, the cost for restoring or stabilizing natural systems far outpaces the costs of taking care of it once that is completed. Through proper management, the extra costs associated with restoration can be controlled over time as long as the maintenance phase continues indefinitely. Also, the longer that natural systems remain in a state of decline before efforts are made to manage them, the more expensive and scientifically challenging it will be to restore them.

Key action steps for establishing a stewardship program for publicly-owned lands and other open space lands set aside in conservation easements:

1. Establish a formal process for negotiating stewardship programs and funding mechanisms as part of new developments where land is set aside in conservation easements. The program should set forth funding level requirements and administration/oversight of funding use to achieve stewardship objectives.
2. Establish an initial five-year stewardship program for publicly-owned natural open space lands. The intent is to begin the process of managing natural resources and building the City's capacity to fund the program on a long-term basis. This should include a formal process of defining new ways in which this type of program can be funded given the potential long-term costs of the program. (It is unlikely that sole reliance on CIP type funding program will be sufficient to accomplish this goal.)

## FUNDING OPTIONS

The availability of funding to implement the **System Plan** will have direct impact on the level of development that can be undertaken. At the local level, the vast majority of direct funding will come through the park dedication fund, CIP, local referendum, and (increasingly) partnerships with developers to set aside open space and provide long-term stewardship funding.

### LOCAL LEVEL FUNDING OPTIONS

The park dedication fund provides funding for parks as long as community development continues to occur. Any controls imposed on the extent (i.e., total number of units) or rate of development (i.e., number of units per year) allowed within the city will limit the revenue generated under this fund. In cases where land is taken in lieu of fees, the fund balance for park development is further reduced. This reality underscores the need for the City to regularly review its park dedication policy relative to park needs and land values. As justified, fees should be periodically adjusted to keep pace with park development costs if the park dedication fund is to remain a viable tool for improving the park system.

Even with periodic adjustments, park dedication fees alone will not be adequate to fund the system plan to an optimal level. Realistically, both new and existing residents will have equal responsibility to bear the costs of developing the system through local taxes. Practically, the local CIP will have to be relied upon to a greater extent for funding portions of the system plan if it is to be implemented. The City also has the option of undertaking a local referendum to provide capital for system improvements.

At the local level, indirect funding of the system will also be vital to implementing the system plan. This is especially the case with greenways, greenway-based trails, and natural resource stewardship programs. Collaboration with the development community and leveraging the economies of the private sector will be critical to realizing these aspects of the system plan.

### OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE FUNDING

As with capital investments, funding ongoing operations and maintenance is a local government responsibility. The challenge lies in that it is difficult to use capital dollars generated from park dedications, certain taxes, or a bond referendum for operations and maintenance functions. In general, funding for operations and maintenance is covered through the City's annual budget.

The most critical aspect of operations and maintenance funding is that it keeps pace with the overall development of the system. To ensure that this happens, the City should define potential increases in operations and maintenance costs as part of all capital improvement projects and budget for these costs accordingly.

### OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

In addition to local funding sources, there are a number of other potential sources of funding, as defined in figure 6.5 on the following table.

FIGURE 6.5 – LIFECYCLE COSTS AND LONG-TERM COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINING EACH SYSTEM COMPONENT

Source	Description/Overview	Probability
<b>State Outdoor Recreation and LCCMR Grants</b>	The State of Minnesota annually allocates funds for park acquisition and development projects that meet recreational needs identified by the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. The grants are competitive and awarded through the Department of Natural Resources according to project merits.	Qualifying for funding for restoration and management of the City's natural resources has some potential. Very competitive.
<b>Land and Water Conservation Fund</b>	The federal government allocates monies each year to states for public acquisition and development projects. The State of Minnesota administers these grants through the Department of Natural Resources.	Funding availability through this program has been limited in recent years. However, there is a growing likelihood that this program will be funded at a higher level in forthcoming years.
<b>ISTEA / T-21</b>	The federal government allocates monies each year for alternative forms of transportation, which includes bicycle trails that focus on transportation.	Funding availability through this program has been robust in recent years. The potential for receiving funding for local trails is relatively high.
<b>Fees/ Enterprise Funds</b>	Minnesota statute allows cities to prescribe and provide for the collection of fees for the use of any city park or other unit of the city park system or any facilities, accommodations, or services provided for public use therein.	Becoming a much more relied upon funding source, especially for singular use facilities ranging from ballfields to picnic shelters.
<b>Partnerships</b>	Relates to partnerships formed with adjacent cities, the county, and school districts to develop, maintain, and operate parks and recreational facilities on a joint-use basis.	With limited funding options, forming partnerships to spread the cost of providing a specific type of service will play a critical role in funding park and recreation initiatives.
<b>Donations</b>	Relates to cash donations, gifts, volunteerism, and professional services donated to the park for planning, acquisition, or development purposes.	Limited potential from a cash perspective, but important with respect to the use of volunteers to offset some program costs.

Although these grant and alternative programs can provide meaningful local funding for certain types of developments, they can only be counted on for augmenting local sources. Ultimately, it will be up to the local citizens to decide the value that they put on the parks, greenways, and trails in the community, and fund them accordingly.

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISION – INTERRELATIONSHIP WITH COMMUNITY EDUCATION

For many years, School District 659’s Community Education program has provided a variety of educational and recreational programs for the residents of Northfield and throughout the school district. In concert with Community Education, the City will continue to refine its approach to recreation programming and leisure services based on feedback from the community and cost-benefit analysis. As determined appropriate by the PRAB and City Council, the City will continue to collaborate with Community Education to ensure that residents have extensive opportunities to participate in a variety of recreational and enrichment programs and services. Through an effective working partnership, it is believed that local residents will have ever-increasing opportunities to participate in programs that are locally-based and cost effective while fostering community spirit and enhanced quality of life.

As part of this process, the City should closely monitor the cost-benefit of services it receives to ensure that residents receive the highest value relative to resource investments. As part of this, existing agreements should be reviewed and updated to make sure they are consistent with current needs and expectations. Evaluation of fees and charges should also occur on a scheduled periodic basis.

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISION – INTERRELATIONSHIP WITH LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS/ FACILITY-USE POLICY

The main purpose of the facility use policy is to prioritize scheduled access and use of parks and facilities in the City of Northfield. The following outlines both mandatory and suggested guidelines for managing this issue.

### GENERAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CITY AND LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

The City of Northfield fully supports organized local athletic associations providing programs and services for the betterment of youth and adults in the city. To this end, the City is committed to providing facilities and material support deemed reasonable by the PRAB and City Council to support these programs. Further, the City, in concert with Community Education, will actively coordinate program offerings to effectively and efficiently meet community needs while avoiding duplication of efforts.

In return, local associations must commit to the City that program offerings are mindful of the public’s health, safety and welfare and are fair and equitable to all residents. In addition, it is the City of Northfield’s policy that the public is best served when there is only one independently incorporated local association per sport or activity. The City also understands and supports that in some cases the public and volunteers are best served by having the traveling component of a particular sport administered by its own independent local association. In such cases, a clear link between associations must be apparent, that each complements the other, and that duplication of effort and use of facilities is avoided.

At its discretion, the City of Northfield may charge differing facility use fees as deemed appropriate by the PRAB and City Council to discourage formation of new local associations that compete with existing athletic associations and/or create a need for duplicate services, which the City of Northfield views as not in the public’s best interest. Further, any new associations that compete with existing athletic associations will be of lower priority and will not be assured of timely access to facilities or other material support. The City of Northfield will not provide any administrative or professional recreation staff liaison assistance to competing local associations determined to be duplication of service and not in the public’s best interest.

The City of Northfield also expects local associations to provide programs in a manner that is in keeping with the City’s vision and policy plan as defined in Section 2, or otherwise documented by the City.

## SCHEDULING PRIORITY FOR FACILITIES PROVIDED BY THE CITY

Scheduling priority for facilities relates to all parks and recreation facilities owned or operated by the City as defined in this document or otherwise provided by the City. Examples include athletic fields, outdoor basketball courts, outdoor hockey rinks, etc. At all times, the City reserves the right to determine if a facility is considered “a scheduled facility” or not. In other words, the City may decide that it is in the public’s best interest to periodically not schedule specific facilities for purposes of the need to rest a field for maintenance or safety or make a specific park or facility available to the public at large due to demand or its classification.

At the discretion of the PRAB and City Council, certain City-owned facilities may be exempted of this policy and be administered under separate policy.

Local associations that meet the stated guidelines and request permitted use of a facility for a single use or ongoing program will be granted that opportunity based on the following priority of use schedule, and within the adopted standards for number of uses per team.

### **Priority #1 - City Programs**

City provided programming, services, and events will be the top priority for facility use. An example includes reserving park space for Jesse James Days each year. Note that Northfield Public Schools *Community Services Division’s* programs are included under this priority.

### **Priority #2 – Youth Programs**

Youth programs (18 and under) that are members of an independently incorporated local association currently recognized by the City of Northfield as the official organization for that particular program offering. One association per sport/activity will be given priority status based on seniority and number of participants. All recognized non-profit organizations must follow these general guidelines:

1. 75% of participants shall be City of Northfield, defined as youth residents 18 years old and under living in Northfield, or who go to school in Northfield
2. Association or Club is a non-profit organization as defined by State statute
3. Association or Club must file a financial statement with the City each year that will be made public upon request; this statement must indicate revenue, expenditures and fund balances
4. Association is open to all Northfield residents and may not discriminate based on race, ethnic background, or religion, or ability; however, team assignments may be based on ability
5. All board meetings are open to the public, with the exception of personnel issues and litigation
6. Organization must have an open process for parents to discuss concerns or recommend changes to the organization
7. Teams are playing during the designated “primary season”
8. The organization must abide by the City of Northfield core values and strategies for promoting healthy youth through involvement in programmed activities as may be developed in forthcoming years

### **Priority #3 – Northfield Public Schools Programs**

Northfield School District 659 school-based programs, such as curriculum programs, interscholastic team practices, games, tournaments, etc.

**Priority #4 – Adult Programs**

Non-profit adult associations or organizations that have 60% or more Northfield residents during the designated primary season. Adult “residents” must either live or work full-time in Northfield.

**Priority #5 – Service Groups**

Northfield non-profit public service groups using City facilities to raise money for the benefit of the entire community.

**Priority #6 – Local Businesses and Groups**

Businesses and neighborhood groups located in Northfield during the designated primary season.

**Priority #7 – Youth Programs, with Lower Percentage of Resident Participants**

Non-profit youth associations or organizations that have 60% or more Northfield residents during the designated primary season.

**Priority #8 – Secondary Season Youth Programs**

Priority #2 local associations during a secondary season.

**Priority #9 – Non-Affiliated Associations**

Youth and adult teams not affiliated with a Northfield non-profit organization. These teams are scheduled on a first come, first served basis after higher priority teams have had an opportunity to schedule their season. At least 50% or more of the participants on each team must either live or work full-time in Northfield. Facility reservations will be limited to home games only, and team practices are limited to a maximum of one per week (may only have one game plus one practice per week maximum).

**FIELD USE FEE**

The City will set fees prior to each season of use by the various local associations and other prioritized uses. All fees, any outstanding bills, and a complete participant roster (where applicable) must be submitted to the Parks and Recreation Department before any scheduling needs will be considered for a given season or event. This fee will be used to cover basic services including, but not limited to, coordination of scheduling and maintenance, providing portable toilets at select locations, and general field set up for games. Excluded items include maintaining a field more than once each day, providing extra portable toilets and/or cleanings, or moving bases.

At the City’s discretion, fees for priorities lower than #2 as previously listed typically covers use only. No maintenance will be performed nor may any changes be made to facilities by the persons/groups making the reservation unless expressly allowing in the permit. Any maintenance or changes to fields may be requested and will be reviewed for feasibility. If the City is able to honor requests, fees will be assessed based on actual expenses incurred as determined by the City.

**FACILITY USE PERMIT**

Priority #3 through #9 teams must have an approved Northfield Park and Recreation Department Facility Use Permit to have access to scheduled facilities.

### PREEMPTIVE CLAUSE

The City of Northfield will make every effort to avoid preemption of scheduled events once a facility has been reserved and all requirements are met. However, the City reserves the right to preempt a scheduled event at a scheduled facility when in the City's best judgment the preemption is in the community's best interests.

### ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

The following procedures will be used for administering facility use policies:

1. Fees for use of scheduled facilities will be subject to change each year at the discretion of the PRAB and City Council.
2. The City will establish dates each year by which teams must commit requests for reservation use in order of priority status. After that date, fields, or facilities will be reserved on a first come, first served basis.
3. If associations or organizations are at the same priority level offering the same sport activity for the same age group and gender, then the team or organization that has the highest seniority will receive the higher priority status for reservations.
4. Any organization that fails to provide for and follow the guidelines set forth by the City, or provides false information on a permit application, is subject to revocation of its permit at the discretion of the PRAB and City Council.
5. No organization will be allowed to sublease the City's facilities without City approval.

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISION – SHARED RESPONSIBILITY AGREEMENTS

As defined in other sections, maximizing the level of cooperation between the City, School District, and local associations is at the core of economically and effectively servicing all of the community's parks and recreational needs. The objective of all joint-use agreements is for the City to derive some quantifiable benefit from forming a partnership, even though the agreement itself may not represent an even split with respect to commitment or responsibility.

Having very clearly defined shared responsibility agreements in place between partners is critical to describing each party's commitments to equitably and predictably implementing the system plan. Key elements of these agreements include:

- **Equal representation** – each partner, through mutual agreement, should appoint an authorized person to represent their interests in any agreement
- **Ongoing communication** – between representatives should be undertaken to define the issues and take action on directives from elected officials
- **Implementation planning** – clearly defines the commitments and responsibilities of partner on an overall basis and on a specific facility basis

On an overall basis, shared responsibility agreements should clearly define mutual goals and general principles of the process. The goals, objectives, and policies as defined in *Section 2 – Vision Statement and Policy Plan* should provide a starting point for this process.

On a specific facility basis, the shared responsibility agreements should clearly define the specific responsibilities of each partner involved in the acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of a particular facility. These detailed agreements are vital to the success of the system plan because it is at this level at which actual implementation takes place.

## GENERAL AGREEMENT PARAMETERS

The following defines the general format for shared responsibility agreements associated with recreational facilities:

- **Name of Project/Park Site:** Defines the name for the site and its classification as part of the system plan
- **Parties to the Agreement:** Defines the parties involved in the agreement and key points of contact/administrator
- **Date and Term of Agreement:** Defines the starting and ending date of the agreement, and any provisions for annual review (to assure that the agreement is meeting its objectives) and terms of renewal (often automatically on a yearly basis unless requests are made for revisions)
- **Site Description:** Clearly defines the property limits, including legal descriptions as appropriate
- **Ownership:** Clearly defines legal owners of the property and specifies any long-term ownership intentions with the property
- **Lease Agreement:** If a particular parcel of property is leased to the City (or vice versa), the conditions of the lease arrangement should be clearly defined
- **Development Program and Site Master Plan:** Clearly defines how the site will be developed in the future; this should include a written program defining all facilities and site amenities along with a graphic master plan illustrating the layout of key development features
- **Land acquisition responsibilities:** Clearly defines each party's responsibility related to funding land acquisition; the time frame for acquisition should be clearly defined
- **Development Responsibilities:** Clearly defines each party's responsibility related to funding development and administration of the development process through final construction; the time frame for development should also be clearly defined
- **Operations and Maintenance Responsibilities:** Clearly defines each party's responsibility related to operating and maintaining the facilities; this should be very specific and include a facility-by-facility breakdown; also important is to define which party has the authority to limit use of a particular facility for maintenance purposes, which is typically given to the party who is responsible for maintaining the facility; the expected level of maintenance should also be defined, such as "safe, sanitary, and operable conditions shall be maintained at all times"
- **Programming and Scheduling:** Clearly defines each party's use of the various facilities and the manner in which they are scheduled, including which party or uses have priority status
- **Insurance:** Clearly defines the level of insurance each party must carry; typically, each party carries liability insurance for the site and lists each other as "additional insured"
- **User Fees and Income from Activities:** Clearly defines how user fees, if collected, and other income will be used; typically, user fees and income are used to off-set debt and operational/maintenance costs
- **Review Process:** A provision should be included establishing an agreement review process
- **Rules:** Clearly defines the standard operational rules, such as time of operation, reservations, use of facilities, etc.

Although shared responsibility agreements have legal standing, it is important that they be written to be understandable by those responsible for implementation, namely the PRAB and City of Northfield' and School District's staff, maintenance crews, and programmers.

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISION – PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Northfield is committed to continuing public involvement through the implementation of the system plan. The degree to which this will occur will vary depending on what aspect of the plan is being implemented. For larger scale projects, such as the development or redevelopment of a neighborhood park, public involvement in the actual design process will be fairly extensive and involve representation from key stakeholders. In addition, forums for broader public input (e.g., open houses and presentations) would also be used as needed to communicate and exchange ideas with interested citizens. For smaller scale projects, notifications of interested parties would be a more appropriate approach.

The objectives associated with involving citizens in the implementation process include:

- Determine who the stakeholders are and their interest in a particular development initiative
- Understand their needs and unique perspectives
- Identify and understand concerns and problems
- Develop alternatives and find appropriate solutions with input from stakeholders

In addition to formalized processes for particular projects, Northfield will use the PRAB to advise the City Council on development initiatives as they occur. The public is welcome to attend its regularly scheduled meetings. Also, Northfield uses numerous tools to provide a consistent level of communication with interested citizens.