

PARKS & TOURISM

VISION STATEMENT

Our mission is to protect the, preserve, maintain and enhance the community's natural resources, creating a desirable environment and destination for residents and visitors.

GOAL 1: To promote our unique natural diversity and features to both residents and visitors that results in sustainable economic growth for the community.

Objective 1: Create a eco-destination brand for the area that residents, visitors and potential businesses and residents can identify with.

Action 1: Continue to work with the Stevens Point Area Convention & Visitors Bureau to promote Travel Green program and identity.

Action 2: Promote quiet recreational opportunities are promoted including gardening, bird watching and other wildlife viewing.

Action 3: Life-long learning is promoted within parks, open spaces and recreational facilities.

GOAL 2: To encourage government and tourism related businesses to adopt more environmentally sustainable practices.

Objective 2.1: Educate businesses and facilitate the process for increasing the participation in the Travel Green program.

Action 1: Develop a series of workshops to facilitate increased participation in Travel Green Wisconsin amongst tourism related businesses.

Objective 2.2: Develop sustainable resource use guidelines, practices and incentives for community events.

Action 1: Create a sustainable best practices document to hand out to event planners.

Action 2: Develop mechanisms (such as indicators) for measuring progress towards sustainable tourism

GOAL 3: To develop and promote sustainable tourism through partnerships and voluntary activities by all sectors and stakeholders.

Objective 3.1: Include sustainable practices as a criterion for evaluating future room tax projects.

Action 1: As part of the application process for room tax projects, projects will be given points for sustainable practices.

Objective 3.2: Inventory current eco-tourism assets in the area. Determine how they are currently being utilized and their potential used for events.

Action 1: Develop a searchable database regarding eco-friendly community assets.

Action 2: Consider regional collaboration for integrated eco-tourism development.

GOAL 4: To provide parks, recreational facilities, open space, streetscapes, and waterways for the benefit, enjoyment health, and wellbeing of Stevens Point residents.

Objective 4.1: Maintain/increase the proportion of park acreage/population as the community (land/population) expands.

Action 1: Identify opportunities to create new parks or open spaces for broad public uses

Action 2: Appropriate unused and underutilized open spaces have been reclaimed for public use.

Action 3: Re-establish wild and native places in the community such as natural shorelines and prairies, incorporating an educational component i.e. plant identification etc.

Objective 4.2: Create a destination that is appealing with historic commercial areas, neighborhoods with sustainable technology practices. Example: gentle lighting, big boulevards, sidewalks, bike lanes.

Action 1: All new development projects should include a dedicated amount of green space which involves native landscaping.

Objective 4.3: Parks of city-wide interest are easily accessible to every resident by foot, bicycles or public transit.

Action 1: Propose modifications to the existing public transit systems to improve linkages to parks

GOAL 5: To maintain our parks, open spaces, recreational facilities, and streetscapes through practical, economic, creative, and collaborative means to achieve clean, safe, inviting, and inspiring spaces for people and wildlife.

Objective 5.1: Biodiversity considerations are integrated into all open space management Decisions and policies and enhance native biodiversity on parks, open spaces, waterways and streetscapes.

Action 1: Protect the natural integrity of our waterways through conservation easements and public ownership.

Action 2: Study resource issues associated with the area waterways and its future (non- point source pollution, invasive species).

Action 3: Support the restoration of open spaces to their natural conditions in coordination with existing programs.

Action 4: The business community and private sector should be an active participant in providing staff and volunteers to assist in the management of the city's parks, open spaces and streetscapes.

Objective 5.2: Streetscapes have been improved to make pedestrian, bike and transit use safe and efficient and make neighborhoods more livable by reducing noise, visual clutter (utility lines), traffic congestion and air pollution by introducing landscaping (emphasizing native) to all neighborhoods.

Objective 5.3: Continue support for proper tree planting and care of city trees. Infrastructure is in place with existing city forestry department.

Action 1: Plant more trees, strive for at least 40% tree canopy for the city of Stevens Point.

Action 2: Promote benefits of city trees on both public and private property.

Objective 5.4: Protect and expand the Green Circle Trail.

Action 1: Develop official use agreements with private landowners whose properties incorporate sections of the Green Circle Trail.

Action 2: Buy land and conservation easements (ex. Green Circle Trail, Plover River, Wisconsin River) through city, county and private donations

GOAL 6: To promote and strengthen community participation in planning, creation, management, and stewardship while building and improving the financial resources for our parks, open spaces, recreational facilities and streetscapes.

Objective 6.1: Increase the long-term success of sustainable tourism projects by involving all primary stakeholders including the local community, tourism industry and government in the development and implementation of a sustainable tourism plan.

Action 1: Raise awareness of sustainable tourism and its implementation by promoting the exchange of information between government and all stakeholders on best practices for sustainable tourism.

Objective 6.2: Parks are promoted as outdoor classrooms, which enhance stewardship of nature and understanding of local places.

Action 1: Each school is linked to a park or open space for learning and stewardship purposes

Action 2: Establish an information campaign to promote the benefits of plant, herb, and flower gardens, streetscapes and native landscaping to the community.

Objective 6.3: Strengthen the permanent, dedicated source of funding for open space acquisition and its management.

Action 1: Investigate dedicated source of funding opportunities for open space land acquisition and management

Action 2: Incorporate volunteers and community-based agencies into maintenance programs.