

VISION

To protect and perpetually preserve Potter Marsh Watershed Park's important ecological value as an intact Community Forest and critical wildlife corridor and a vital contributor to Potter Marsh, while strategically offering low-impact recreational use and educational experiences that foster community stewardship and appreciation for the natural area's undeveloped character and resources.



GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Potter Marsh Watershed Park is protected as a natural area. Its primary purpose is to permanently protect its conservation values including relatively natural habitat (forest and woodland resources, wildlife resources, water resources and ecosystems services, and contributions to the health of surrounding ecosystems) and open space characteristics. Secondary to protecting the natural area and its natural resources in their existing conditions is human use of the park. Recreation and educational activities focus on passive experiences, providing opportunities dedicated to wildlife and nature observation and learning.

Development of Potter Marsh Watershed Park will look different than other municipal parkland in Anchorage. The park will be developed in limited ways to support passive recreation – in other words, nature observation and education. The Conservation Easement encourages low-impact modes of transportation to support access across the park for nature observation and educational use. Access will be managed to maintain an environment that supports these purposes.

All recreation and active transportation methods will be carefully aligned with and supportive of the park's conservation goals, ensuring the long-term protection and enhancement of its conservation values.

PASSIVE RECREATION

For the purposes of this master plan and within the boundaries of the Potter Marsh Watershed Park, **passive recreation** will be defined as low-intensity, non-motorized outdoor activities that have minimal disturbance or impacts on the natural environment, wildlife, or character of the park.

Passive recreation relies on the natural setting or very basic developed infrastructure necessary for accessibility and resource protection. It focuses on nature observation, study, and appreciation; relaxation and rejuvenation; and promoting preservation and calm enjoyment of nature.

GOALS

Establishing clear goals will ensure that the Potter Marsh Watershed Park Master Plan serves the community without violating the environmental protections set forth in the Conservation Easement. The goals will provide a framework for the development of the park that will protect the ecological health and wildlife habitat critical to the parks natural integrity and promote nature-based, low-impact recreation opportunities to learn about and experience the serene and natural environment found there.

Potter Marsh Watershed Park goals include...

Protect the ecological health of the park and the downstream Potter Marsh through conservation and stewardship efforts.

- Maintain the watershed integrity and minimize impacts on streams, channels, wetlands, and natural drainage patterns.
- Maintain the intact forest and woodlands to provide wildlife habitat and unfragmented migration corridor, aesthetic scenery, clean air and water, and rich native plants community
- Maintain the existing undisturbed natural quality of the park.
- Uphold the Conservation Easement and ensure all future park developments are in adherence to the Conservation Easement, protecting the land, habitats, ecological systems, and wildlife in perpetuity.

Support access for nature-based recreation and education by providing a high-quality, low-impact experience that builds stewardship.

- Establish a network of low-density, non-motorized, multi-use trails designed for low-impact, passive recreation.
- Establish clearly marked and appropriately sized trailheads, parking areas, and visitor amenities.
- Create safe and formalized trail connections to the surrounding neighborhoods, adjacent parks, and the South Potter Marsh parking area.
- Promote the park as an outdoor classroom to teach about the watershed's significance and Community Forest benefits, using interpretation to deliver conservation messages and develop stewardship through recreation.
- Strategically place viewpoints and overlooks that provide opportunities to observe and appreciate the surrounding natural landscape.

Build lasting partnerships with a community of dedicated users and user groups with a commitment to stewarding the park.

- Leverage relationships with adjacent land owners/managers to promote collaboration and draw on funding and resources that exceed Anchorage Parks and Recreation abilities alone.
- Formalize partnerships with local groups to promote volunteer support, assist with trail maintenance, habitat monitoring, and public stewardship of the park.
- Work with entities that have a mission-related interest to this land to help fund improvements that are shared in relevance, such as interpretive signage, educational programs, and citizen science programs.

