I - Introduction / Planning Framework

Overview
This document represents the cumulative effort of the planning team, advisory committees, and Stearns County staff. The project began in mid-1994 and reached completion of the master plan in June of 1995.

Project Scope
The project focused on the preparation of a master plan for Quarry Park and Nature Preserve. The planning process took into consideration the history of the site, setting, needs of the surrounding communities, natural and cultural resources of the site, and reclamation issues. The result is this master plan for the park that provides outdoor recreation opportunities for the public that are appropriate for the setting.

The master plan described here provides the guidelines for development of the park and a tool for public presentations and funding applications. The plan is only the first step in the planning, development, and managing of this unique resource. It should be viewed as firm enough for orderly and agreed upon development, yet flexible enough for improvements to be incorporated as time and experience dictate.

Planning Framework
The planning framework provided structure to the undertaking of this project. The framework consists of a number of components:

- Public involvement
- Public agency involvement
- Planning process

Each of these are defined below.

Public Involvement
The public was the primary driving force behind the master plan for the park. Their involvement in the process was through public meetings (which began prior to this planning process) and citizen advisory committees, including:

- Ad Hoc Advisory Committee -- responsible for overseeing the entire planning process and representing the interests of the public.
- Technical Advisory Committee -- provided valuable background information on technical issues ranging from site resources to site safety.
- User Group Advisory Committee -- provided user-based perspective on park development and use issues.

These advisory committees worked in partnership with the consultant team throughout the planning process. The plan represented in this document reflects the outcome of that partnership.

Figure 1.1 illustrates the extent to which the public's involvement in the planning process is encouraged. As the figure illustrates, the master plan itself is only one of many steps that require public involvement.
Figure 1.1 - Public Involvement in the Planning Process

The users of the park must become its greatest advocates. To do that, they must be given the opportunity to participate and develop a sense of ownership in its outcome.

Public Agency Involvement

To ensure consistency with broader, county-wide planning objectives, policies, and implementation procedures, the consultant team and advisory committees worked closely with Stearns County Park Department staff. They served in a technical advisory and consultant role on pertinent planning issues.

Planning Process

The planning of the park followed a step-by-step process that encouraged public participation and allowed for a series of checks and balances. This approach insured pertinent issues were considered and addressed in the proper sequence. Figure 1.2 illustrates the planning process.

Figure 1.2 - Planning Process Overview