



**River Bend**  
NATURE CENTER

## **Strategic Plan | 2024-2027**



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## MISSION

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River Bend Nature Center inspires curiosity, respect, and care for nature.

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## VALUES

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- 1. Learning.** We value education because it inspires current and future generations to care for our planet and the unique natural habitat of River Bend.
  - 2. Stewardship & preservation.** We value the prairies, forests, river, ponds, trails, flora, and fauna entrusted to our care and strive to preserve this natural wonder for the benefit of all members of our community.
  - 3. Wellness.** We value the healing power of nature to make us healthier and more joyful and seek to ensure everyone has access and connection to this source of well-being.
  - 4. Diversity & inclusion.** We value the diversity of people who live, work, and play in our community and seek to remove all barriers to this unique habitat and our programming.
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## GOALS

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- Increase awareness and diversify participation.
- Address vital facility and infrastructure needs.
- Protect, preserve, and enhance our natural resources.
- Grow resources to achieve our priorities.



# Building Community through nature

743 acres of woodlands, prairie and wetlands with 10 miles of trails to hike, bike, ski and snowshoe.

# Community Engagement

- Over 300 school programs September - May
- Over 800 people attend annual events, Maple Syrup Fun Run and Bats, Bones & Bonfires
- Program offerings for all ages and abilities



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## OPERATING PLAN

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### 1. Increase awareness & diversify participation.

**1a.** Invest in telling and sharing our story better (improved storytelling, increased outreach).

**1b.** Add intentional programming for diverse and underrepresented audiences (Deaf and Blind, Somali, Latinx, seniors) to pursue careers in conservation e.g.).

**1c.** Pursue sustainable, incremental growth in educational programs for school districts beyond Faribault.

**1d.** Grow engagement in adult programming.

### 2: Address vital facility & infrastructure needs.

**2a.** Leverage existing and confirmed resources to address deferred maintenance.

**2b.** Determine scope and potential project costs; conduct feasibility study for capital campaign.

**2c.** Build a public case for support focused on interpretive center, wayfinding, and trails.

### 3: Protect, preserve, & enhance our natural resources.

**3a.** Develop master plan.

**3b.** Address invasive species and habitat restoration through funding from public grants.

**3c.** Pursue opportunities to acquire and preserve adjacent and nearby lands as they become available.

### 4: Grow resources to achieve our priorities.

**4a.** Seek regional park designation.

**4b.** Build fundraising infrastructure.

**4c.** Invest in staff to achieve the priorities of this plan

**4d.** Plan for a potential campaign for capital improvements (see goal #2).

