

Destination for Discovery

Executive Summary

Transforming a Traditional Nature Center *Destination for Discovery* redirects Tamarack Nature Center from the role of a traditional nature center towards an active, vital regional center for community engagement using the arts, humanities, sciences, adventure and play to connect people to nature. Guided by a new mission, a master plan and a commitment to growing the region's infrastructure for healthy living, *Destination for Discovery* is guided by these principles:



- The natural world inspires creativity and cultivates an appreciation of nature.
- Authentic experiences with nature—those that are open-ended, use real objects and materials and are true to their context—afford optimum opportunities for self-directed learning.

- Frequent, positive experiences with loved ones are critical to fostering an appreciation for the natural world.
- Outdoor play and recreation contribute to healthy human development—physical, mental and social.



Healing the broken bond between our young and nature is in everyone's self-interest, not only because aesthetics or justice demands it, but also because our mental, physical and spiritual health depend upon it.

— Richard Louv
Last Child in the Woods



For More Information, Contact:

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Tamarack N

Mission

Helping people discover the value of nature through art, play, exploration and inquiry.

Vision

Tamarack Nature Center is...

- Valued as a first-choice destination for families and children wanting to engage with the natural world.
- A critical asset for a region that values nature experiences.
- A familiar and trusted destination for people seeking ways to reconnect to nature.
- As critical to the overall health and well-being of the region as are good schools, libraries and health care.



2008 Capital Appropriation Request

This request is for \$745,000 in State funding to support the design, development and construction of high-priority destinations at Tamarack Nature Center including a nature play area and parent pavillion, woodland play stream, children's garden and associated access improvements.

	2008 State Request	Matching Funds
Design & Construction Administration	\$ 47,500	\$ 47,500
Construction	\$584,000	\$584,000
Furniture/Fixtures/Equipment	\$ 63,500	\$ 63,500
Total	\$745,000	\$745,000

Leveraging Resources

In 2004, the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources provided \$95,000 to develop the *Destination for Discovery* master plan. This was matched by a \$149,948 grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The project was awarded a second IMLS grant in 2007 for \$118,000 to complete the design phase for major destinations. The balance of the match will be funded by Ramsey County, foundation grants and private donors.





Woodland Play Stream



Indoor Exhibits



Teal Pond Boardwalk



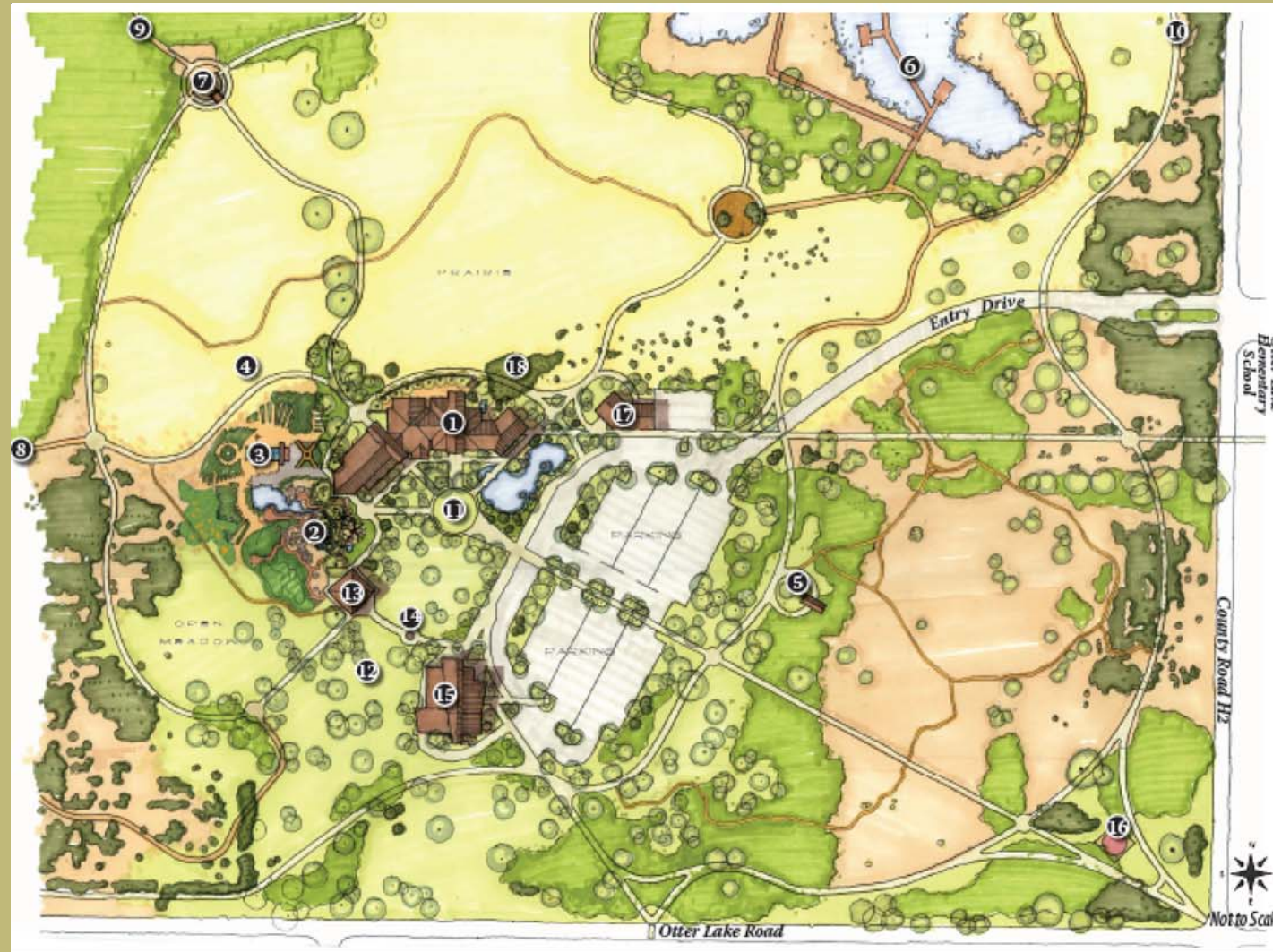
Wildlife Viewing



Children's Garden



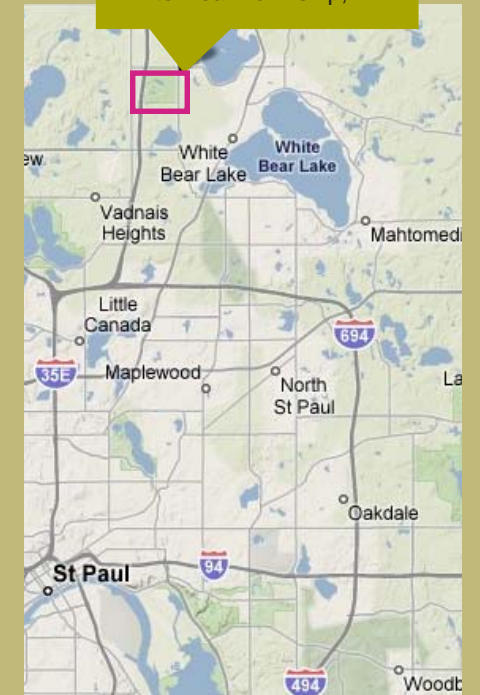
Art Classes



Destinations for Discovery

- 1** Nature Center
 - Indoor Exhibits
 - Lookout Tree
 - Wildlife Thicket
 - Outdoor Classroom
 - Overlook Plaza
 - 2** Nature Play Area
 - Woodland Playstream
 - Boulder Prospect
 - Upside-Down Tree
 - Rolling Hills and Hollows
 - Trunks and Stumps
 - 3** Children's Garden
 - Observation Plaza
 - Potting Shed
 - Pond/Stream
 - 4** Unstructured Nature Play
 - 5** Sugar Shack & Cider House
 - 6** Teal Pond
 - Boardwalk and Decks
 - Floating Platforms
 - 7** Observation Tower
 - 8** To Bird Blind
 - 9** To Tamarack Lake Raft
 - 10** To Canopy Walk
- Additional Outdoor Features:
- 11** Orientation Hub
 - 12** Outdoor Gathering Area
 - 13** Multi-Purpose Pavilion
 - 14** Fire Pit
 - 15** Art Center
 - 16** Art Node
 - 17** Garage Maintenance Building
 - 18** Wildlife Thicket

Tamarack Nature Center
 White Bear Township, MN



Environmental Art



Expanded Preschool



Live Animal Habitats

Destination for Discovery Reunites Nature and Children.

Our children are the first generation to be raised without meaningful contact with the natural world.

Richard Louv
Last Child in the Woods



The *Destination for Discovery* master plan guides the development of

- educational concepts and strategies
- site redevelopment and building expansion
- engaging hands-on environments, exhibits and destinations

Nature Play Area

Design, development and construction of a multi-acre site designed for self-directed nature play. Includes stumps and trunks for crawling in, on & around; hills and hollows for tumbling & rolling; digging places, hiding & climbing places. A parent pavillion is located on the edge of the play area.

Woodland Play Stream

Design, development and construction of a natural-looking channel of water pools, cascades, meandering loops for dam-building, bridge-making and rock-hopping.

Children's Garden

Design, development and construction of a neighborhood of working gardens complete with a rustic potting shed, stone water cistern, greenhouse and compost bins, a hand pump and lots of watering cans.

Improved Access

Design, development and construction of an expanded parking lot and drop-off area for young children and people with physical limitations. Includes paved trail connections between parking lots, buildings, nature play area and children's garden.

nature Center

Interpretive Strategies

1st Layer



Create the settings, set the scenes for open-ended exploration where self-driven inquiry happens.

2nd Layer



Engage visitors in activities that give them easy entry points into unfamiliar territory.

3rd Layer



Put visitors in optimum places to experience new perspectives on the natural world.

4th Layer



Highlight the moments when new perspectives are best revealed.

5th Layer



Provide materials for self-directed exploration & experimentation.