

Ashtabula County Metroparks
Strategic Plan – 2017 – Adopted April 12, 2017

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE (From Bylaws Adopted 5/12/2015)

The Ashtabula County Metropolitan Park District (ACMPD) was established in accordance with Section 1545 of the Ohio Revised Code. ACMPD was created to conserve, preserve and to protect Ashtabula County's natural resources and to provide outdoor recreational experiences Ashtabula County residents, while enhancing Ashtabula County's tourism industry. ACMPD aims to provide these services to every age, every ability and in every season of the year. Park areas maintained by ACMPD will combine the District's goals of recreation, conservation, tourism and preservation for future generations.

AUTHORIZATION

The Ashtabula County Metroparks is a separate political subdivision of the State of Ohio, authorized by legislative act (Revised Code Chapter 1545) under the Conservation Section of the Constitution of the State of Ohio. Accordingly, the Ashtabula County Metroparks is not a part of any other local form of government such as the County or any municipality.

MISSION STATEMENT (From Handbook Adopted 12/21/2016)

The Ashtabula County Metroparks' Mission Statement is to preserve adequate open space, to provide park and (passive) recreational areas to meet our growing needs, to maintain examples of the natural beauty and rural character of our county, to enhance our natural resources, educate about our natural surroundings, promote a pleasant and health-giving environment for the people of Ashtabula County.

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS (From bylaws)

The policy-making body of the Ashtabula County Metroparks is the Board of Park Commissioners. The Park Board consists of five members who serve without pay and are appointed by the Judge of the Ashtabula County Probate Court.

VISION (Extracted from prior recommendations)

The Ashtabula County Metroparks will acquire, conserve and sustainably manage significant natural resources in Ashtabula County while providing the public with outdoor recreational and educational opportunities and experiences.

Ashtabula County Metroparks will provide the citizens of Ashtabula County and the broader region with a clean, safe and outstanding park and preserve system.

VALUES (Extracted from prior recommendations)

The Ashtabula County Metroparks affirms that we will perform our duties embracing these values:

- *Integrity: Through accessibility and transparency, Metroparks will develop the trust of the community to which we are responsible.*
- *Collaboration: We will provide opportunities to achieve common goals through interaction with the public and organizations.*
- *Stewardship: We plan and manage resources effectively and responsibly.*
- *Service: We deliver services with courtesy and respect while meeting the public's needs.*

Goals to Fulfill This Mission: (From Employee Handbook adopted 12/21/16)

- To preserve, maintain and protect a diversity of natural resources and related ecosystems throughout the park system.

- To provide safe, clean, convenient and appropriate public access to and use of park properties.
- To foster increased appreciation within the general public for the value of parks and their contribution to the quality of life.
- To provide educational, cultural and recreational opportunities and events which are compatible with environmental consciousness, a conservation ethic, resource preservation, a healthy lifestyle and community enhancement.
- To acquire new lands, to further assure the preservation of our natural heritage.
- To conduct all park operations, programs, and activities in a safe, efficient, cost effective manner.

Additional Specific Objectives - (Adapted from Advisory Recommendations)

Objective 1. Professionally managed organization that practices responsible and transparent financial, property and personnel management

Action Items (each action item will have an action plan)

1. Hire subordinate staff as necessary to support the Vision
2. Operate transparently with open communication
3. Respect the public's and park users' needs and expectations

Objective 2. Responsible Property Stewardship that protects both the land and wildlife of all properties

Action Items

1. Adopt a Comprehensive Land Management Policy
2. Adopt a Comprehensive Park Plan
3. Adopt a Comprehensive Land Acquisition Policy
4. Identify and commit funding necessary to effectively comply with these Policies

Objective 3. Public Engagement that will result in widespread public participation and support

Action Items

1. Provide lifelong recreational opportunities for community residents
2. Encourage community involvement thru the engagement of volunteers
3. Engage and include the public regarding park development plans
4. Promote an Ashtabula County Metro Parks "brand" (For Fun, For Health For Life)
5. Provide public information materials to the public and to the media
6. Active participation in social media
7. Gather information to determine public's needs, understanding of and satisfaction with Park services
8. Collaborate with other organizations and agencies to encourage widespread use

Objective 4. Manage Assets to promote the Parks' long term viability

Action Items

1. Develop a multi-year financial plan that will sustain activity and growth.
2. Maintain Sound Fiscal Management and Policies.
3. Develop organizational expertise in pursuing and successfully acquiring financial resources.