

Inspiration: New homes and restored prairie

Bayport's new development balances growth with conservation

The Minnesota Land Trust has completed a permanent conservation easement with Contractor Property Developers Company (CPDC) as part of a new residential community to be built in Bayport, Minnesota. The 245-acre development, named *Inspiration*, will feature significant preserved natural areas along with approximately 250 new rooftops providing single-family homes, townhomes and condominiums. The residences will be clustered on approximately 95 acres while the surrounding protected areas will include restored prairie, community gardens as well as hiking, biking and walking trails.

The site currently consists of farm fields in addition to a small wetland, remnant oak savanna and oak woodlands. It is located on a "bench" above the St. Croix River just beyond the Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway boundary and is surrounded by other protected lands including the City of Bayport's Barker Alps Park, St. Croix Savanna Scientific and Natural Area and the Bayport Wildlife Management Area.

Earlier plans suggested the potential for a full build-out of approximately 800 homes in typical subdivision fashion. But the city, CPDC and the Minnesota Land Trust crafted a progressive new plan: drastically reducing the number of residences and rooftops and clustering them to one portion of the site. Then, adding trails, community gardens and restored prairie in the larger, permanently protected area.

"...modern cultures have moved away from their connections to the natural world, and have altered their environments, upsetting the balance of nature.

--from *Inspirationbayport.com*

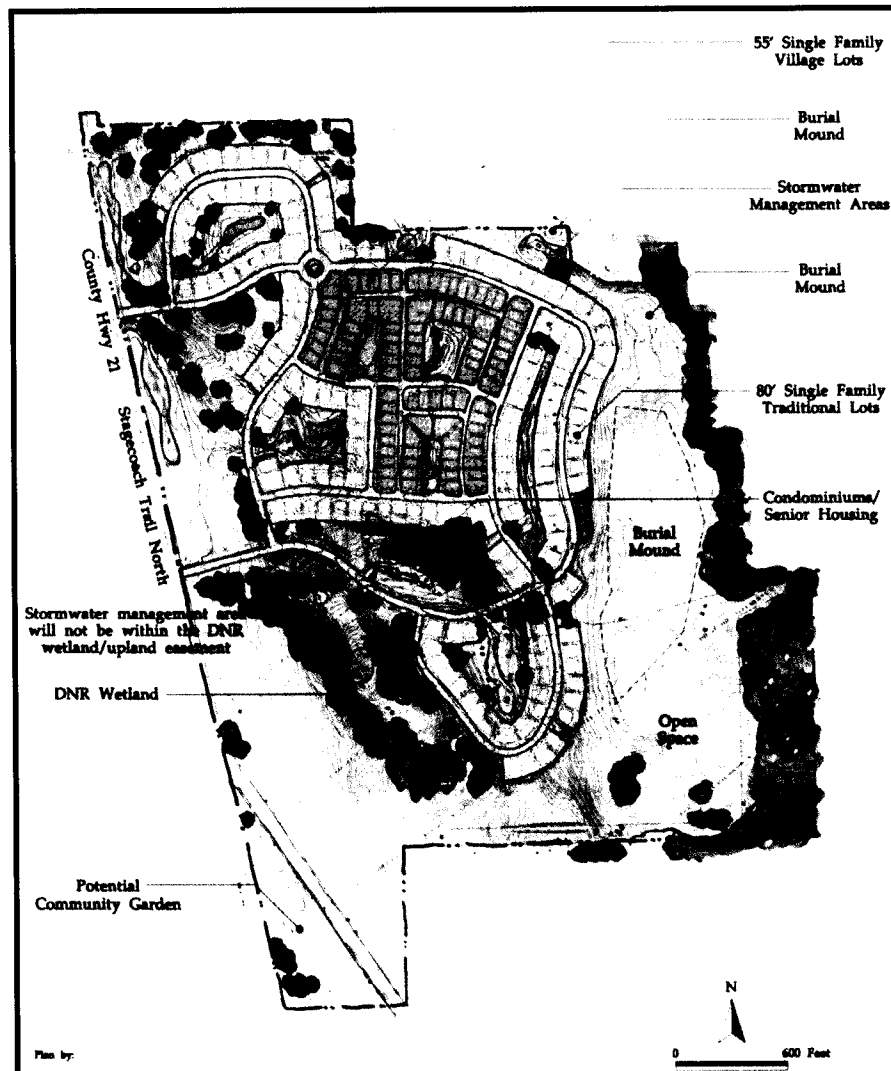
Once the site is developed, its old farm fields will be restored to native prairie and oak savanna. To accomplish this, CPDC is working with the Minnesota DNR on a restoration plan that is compatible with the management of the Wildlife Management Area and the Scientific and Natural Area.

Once restoration is complete, the protected areas will be transferred to the City of Bayport as a public park. These areas will add to an existing larger corridor of protected areas that, together with the surrounding lands, will provide valuable habitat and scenic values for the residents of Bayport and all those who visit this area.

For more than 70 years the property was used by the Minnesota Department of Corrections as the Stillwater Prison Farm. The property was later transferred to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources where it was managed as part of the Bayport Wildlife Management Area until 1994.

In addition to the Land Trust easement, there are also sites identified as burial mounds which are restricted by State statute and monitored by the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council. A previous easement, held by the Department of Natural Resources, protects bluffs and a small wetland on the property.

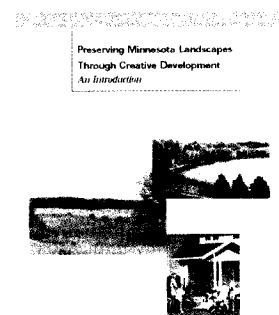
CPDC has been involved in other conservation developments in the Twin Cities including: *Victor Gardens* near Hugo, *Liberty on the Lake* in Stillwater, *Evermoor* in the Rosemount/Apple Valley area, and *Town Lakes* in Albertville, MN.



Concept plan for Inspiration

Conservation Design Portfolio -- A printed resource for those seeking to build quality communities.

The Minnesota Land Trust has recently reprinted its Conservation Design Portfolio, a resource developed by the Land Trust and the University of Minnesota. This is an excellent resource for those interested in exploring innovative ways to design new residential developments. The Portfolio introduces essential concepts in conservation-based development along with actual case studies of built works and those in various stages of planning.



The Conservation Design Portfolio was reprinted with assistance from *The Initiative Foundation*, serving Central Minnesota.

Copies may be ordered by contacting the Minnesota Land Trust at 651-647-9590.