

Park District of Oak Park *Park District 2013-15 Strategic Plan*



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PAGE

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Introduction

The Park District of Oak Park (PDOP) worked with Heller and Heller Consulting, Inc. (HHC) to develop the Park District 2013-15 Strategic Plan. The Plan will be aligned with the start of the budget year, beginning January 2013 and continuing through December 2015. The Strategic Plan's intent is to:

- Establish direction for the District
- Fulfillment of mission
- Align the organization around a common vision
- Reinforce the culture, demonstrated through values
- Create action toward accomplishment, including measurement of progress
- Provide priorities for resource allocation
- Continuous improvement of operations
- Strengthen organizational competencies related to management of change and innovation

An important part of the process consisted of a review of organizational performance. This included a review of the 2004 Comprehensive Park and Recreation Master Plan, 2010 Community Survey results, and 2007 Strategic Initiatives. In addition, Board members, key community leaders, and members of the Park District Citizen Committee (PDCC) members were interviewed or provided input.

Furthermore, the District desired to engage employees in the strategy development and implementation process, resulting in a meaningful document for the staff. The “voice” of the employee and customer are woven throughout the strategic direction.

The District, through its Vision Statement, ***We strive to exceed the needs of our diverse community with a collaborative and innovative approach***, will align its efforts around the key tenets of the statement, including collaborative methods, innovative approaches, and the ability to exceed expectations. These words are repeated throughout the rest of this document. This is a lofty statement, intended to create a highly engaged and innovative agency committed toward continuously improving services.

In 2007, the District developed Strategic Initiatives. In July 2012, the Park Board of Commissioners met to review the Initiatives. As a result, they were slightly altered. The new Initiatives include:

- Customer Focus
- Financial strength
- Organizational excellence
- Ongoing infrastructure, maintenance and enhancements
- Staff excellence

The Strategic Plan process included a review of the mission and vision statements, as well as the organizational values. The Strategic Planning process included a Board workshop, input sessions from the Park District Citizen Committee and key leaders, multiple Leadership Team meetings, employee workshops and focus groups, and successive reviews of information. This iterative process provided opportunities for review and reflection.

The elements of the Plan include the major areas as follows:

- Revised mission, vision, and values
- Summary of Board, PDCC, staff, and community leader input
- Notes from Board and staff workshops
- Information about the Balanced Scorecard framework for strategy
- Strategic Initiatives refinement
- Development of Goals and Goal Statements
- Strategy Maps
- Strategic Objectives
- Guidelines for Implementation
- Strategic Plan Definitions

Mission, Vision, and Values

A good starting point for strategy is a review and development of a mission and vision. This was achieved in successive Board and staff workshops, providing an opportunity to reflect on the revised statements. The mission statement was shortened, but the essence of the statement remained the same. Mission statements define the business or purpose of the organization. Vision statements are more aspirational; what do we hope to become? The essence of strategic planning asks these three basic questions:

- **Where are we now?**
- **Where do we want to go?**
- **How will we get there?**

The intent of the Park District of Oak Park Strategic Plan 2013-2015 is to address these questions.

Mission Statement

In partnership with the community, we enrich lives by providing meaningful experiences through programs, parks, and facilities

Vision Statement

We strive to exceed the needs of our diverse community with a collaborative and innovative approach

Values

Values identify the main tools that will be used to accomplish the mission and vision. The staff developed the following values:

- Partnerships: We will work collaboratively with others in our community
- Responsible Leadership: We will create a high performing, engaged, and accountable organization
- Integrity: In all that we do, we will adhere to moral, honest, and ethical principles and work toward accessibility and inclusion
- Innovation: We will continuously try new methods and ideas, adapt services according to trends, and continuously improve processes in order to exceed the needs of our customers
- Sustainability: The District will endure through renewal, maintenance, stewardship and stability in all aspects of operation

Summary of Input Information

As part of the Strategic Planning process, interviews were completed with key community leaders and PDOP full-time and part-time staff. In addition, members of the Park District Advisory Committee were briefed about the Plan's progress and were asked for their comments.

The key leaders included:

- Dee Brennan, Executive Director of Oak Park Public Library
- Dr. Steven Isoye, Superintendent of Oak Park River Forest High School
- Gavin Morgan, Executive Director of Oak Park Township
- Cara Pavlicek, Interim Manager of the Village of Oak Park
- Dr. Al Roberts, Superintendent of School District 97

Comments summarizing the meetings with the key leaders are as follows:

Tell me about your future direction. How can the Park District align its strategic plan with yours?

According to one leader, the future needs digitizing, synergizing and social ‘medializing’ for example; digitize photographs and self-published e-books. Also, always consider how patrons receive their information and how the agencies share their information. Lastly, sharing office space, infrastructure, energy costs or joint bids illustrate a cooperative future. We serve many of the same customers, so there is natural synergy

What are examples of organizational strengths that we need to make sure we build on for the development of a strategic plan?

The organization strength is it has flourished from top to bottom. The strong mission focused board and staff have built a good and lasting relationship with the public. This community engagement is indicative of a dedication to transparency, provided by the District’s exceptional leadership. The District knows how to build consensus with the public. Other comments:

- They are all about neighborhoods and neighborhood parks.
- Make sure the quality of the experience is accessible for all, as equitable access is important.
- They have approached facilities with good stewardship; good investment of historical properties and have protected them. They have done a great job with their historical properties.

What opportunities are there for improvement or areas of weakness the District needs to strengthen in order to effectively implement the plan?

Other than continuing to build on communication efforts, there were no comments for improvement as follows:

- They know when to reach out when they do not have the strength.
- I don’t know enough about their services to have an informed opinion.
- Not really, though they have big challenges with new big projects.
- No... nothing worries me. They are constricted with a lack of available space, which will be a continued challenge.

Are there any specific facility/park/program service improvement ideas that you consider to be a strength or an opportunity for improvement?

Seniors are asking for more programs and parents are wondering about the “in-betweeners”, those too old for camps, too young to be on their own, and the latchkey kids. Look into the YMCA for partnership opportunities. Also:

- Language classes
- Swimming facilities

What do you consider to be the three major issues facing the Park District in the future?

How would you prioritize the District's efforts to tackle the issues?

Most of the responses related to finance, specifically maintaining financial stability, funding, and competing demands. Others included space for facilities, parks and green space usage/sustainability. Other comments:

- The public perception of local government is not good; though the District has a good reputation.
- Administrative facilities' improvement is an opportunity.

Any ideas how the District can strengthen or build new partnerships?

Partnerships are strong overall. Minor comments included: more collaboration and communication within the agencies and stakeholders. Other responses:

- It would be interesting to talk to the athletics and club staff members of the high school district to get their opinion.
- The District is great to work with. The District did a good job with police in the basketball situation. We have done a good job with sharing facilities.

How would you assess the District's efforts in communicating with its residents? Any ideas for improvement? How would you assess the District's brand and image?

Generally positive responses as the brand and image are strong, but the job of strengthening the brand/image is never done.

- I do get the program guide. I have not heard anything from the community about any communication issue. They seem to do a great job.
- Technology, increased population, and facilities. Improvement ideas include maximizing the use of technology and improving facilities.
- Maybe the District should place trail signage with mileage distances and an adult exercise area
- There are many viewpoints in Oak Park and there are a lot of different opinions to consider.

In addition to the key leader meetings, three meetings were held with staff to review topic areas. Additionally, Park Board and PDCC weighed in on the Plan. All of the comments are listed as follows:

Park District Strengths

- Volunteer infrastructure
- Quality Special Events
- Many staff live in town
- Sponsorship/Fundraising
- Solid reputation in the community
- Renovated parks
- Risk management efforts continue to improve
- Renovation projects – public process has been significant
- Strive to serve diverse user groups
- Changing programs with needs
- Community view of District is very good
- Openness to partnerships
 - PACT programs
- Financial strength
 - Future vigilance
 - Program accountability and trust
- Lots of job opportunities for part-time/seasonal staff
- Decentralized supervisors
 - Strength and weakness
- Good teamwork
- Financial management and fiscal responsibility
- Improvements in technology have occurred
- Volunteer infrastructure
- Sponsorship/Fundraising

Opportunities for Improvement

- Customer service – satisfaction surveys. We need an overall system of measurement
- Understanding who are our customers
- Non-users – how do we get them involved?
- We are evolving from capital to maintenance mode
- No maintenance management system exists
- Maintenance is decentralized - are there redundancies?

- Customer contact when immediate information is needed
- Seniors, teens, and active adults programming; we need to do a better job
- Marketing/branding of historical properties
- Develop criteria for what makes employees successful
- Technology still needs improvement
- Communication
 - Standardize
 - Think outside of the box
- Innovation is needed
 - Need support, courage
- Relationships with new partners
- Creative staffing/roles
- Training/cross training
- External communication – what we have to offer
- Ability to say no
- Standardized processes are needed
- Employees need better knowledge of other areas
- Youth sports
 - Referee training
- Gymnastics improvements will happen with new facility
- Accountability – performance management
- How to provide geographical proximity for programs
- Scholarship program
- Retaining and recruiting great employees
- Conversation with employees that have grown out of their position
- Managing change – roll out plan
 - Tools for change
 - Emotions
- Maintain our fiscal strength - current operations/growth
- Understanding other's roles
- Communication among departments
- Agency expectation of response/lead times
- Two way communication – up and down
- Job title confusion

Major Issues

- Programming new facilities
- Operating funds for new facilities
- Changing demands for facilities
- Hitting the ground running in new facilities
- Outside competition
- Operations – predictive and preventive maintenance
- Managing what the community expects for new facilities
- Balance master planning with existing operations
- Technology
- Major projects/employee burnout
- Training available for staff
- Facility attendant training
- Revenue loss from Ridgeland
- More supervision at Longfellow needed
- Maybe implement a park ranger program
- Adaptability – staff, policies
- Training – facility attendant is a grey area – why not second shift maintenance department
- Changing rules in the middle of the game
- There will be a lot of change; it will be hard to manage
- Identifying appropriate workload
- Investigate new best practice equipment

Program/Facility Improvements

- Maintain inventory of assets
- Volunteer coordinator needed
- Train pre-teens for future opportunities
- New maintenance facility needed
- Community volunteering and standardization of process
- New Web site – educating/serving the community
- New turf field
- Dedicated preschool
- Dedicated storage area
- New telephone system needed
- Re-skin the conservatory
- Improve baseball fields

- Inventory control for supplies
- Organized storage, especially at 218 Madison
- Soccer field improvement
- Senior programming

Internal Communication and Support

- HR technology/data mining
- Marketing – continue to innovate
- Improved process for maintenance requests
- Involving maintenance more in programming
- Internal staff directory
- Searchable document with key words
- Posting new information in one folder
- Very satisfied with internal support
- Technology can help
- Everyone should take responsibility for communication
- Finding efficient ways to communicate
- More information isn't necessarily better
- Too many meetings
- What is available/tools?
- Better communication internally with information in order to provide feedback to callers
- Right job/person
- Departmental space for work
- Teamwork – it does not come from meetings; it comes from working together
- Training and preparation for difficult situations

Description of Organizational Culture

- Dynamic
- Fast paced
- Laid back
- Responsive
- Passionate
- Progressive
- Dedicated
- Realistic

- Satisfying
- Focused
- Rewarding
- Supportive
- Knowledgeable
- Fantastic place to work

Partnerships Opportunities

- Forest Preserve
- Dominican and Concordia--theatre, field usage
- Co-op with local Park District – focus on seniors
- Community colleges
- Downtown business district – special events
- Partner with similar providers for like partners
- Reach out to special interest groups
- Cactus Club
- Teen programming ideas

The Balanced Scorecard

The Park District of Oak Park Strategic Plan is based on the Balanced Scorecard, a strategy framework that emphasizes the cause and effect relationships among distinct yet interrelated perspectives: customer needs, financial performance, internal support processes, and organizational learning and growth. The Scorecard also includes a measurement system that monitors organizational performance. The Scorecard focuses on the key drivers of success that lead to the achievement of mission and vision.

The Balanced Scorecard framework includes four themes:

- Customer: To achieve our mission and vision, how should we appear to our customers?
- Financial: To succeed financially, how should we appear to our taxpayers?
- Internal business: To satisfy our customers, which business practices must we do extremely well?
- Learning and growth: To achieve our mission and vision, how will we sustain our ability to change and improve, and develop leaders among the staff and Board?

Basic tenets of the four themes are outlined more specifically below. This list includes specific examples of areas for consideration within each theme.

Customer

- Product/service attributes such as price, programs, quality, availability of services
- Customer relationships
- Service qualities such as access mechanisms, service standards, customer requirements and encounters
- Partnerships

Financial

- Revenue growth
- Productivity
- Financial results
- Cost recovery
- Efficiency
- Tax versus non-tax revenue percentages

Internal Business

- Operations Management (maintenance practices, program development, park design)
- Customer management processes (support systems and technology)
- Innovation processes
- Regulatory and social processes (safety and environmental)

Learning and Growth

- Human capital (competencies)
- Information capital (organizational knowledge)
- Organization capital (culture, work environment, leadership)

The strategic recommendations included in this Plan outline future efforts and resource allocation relating to these four themes. This approach ensures a focus on the customer, continuous improvement to internal support processes, financial sustainability, and supporting organizational learning and growth in support of strategic direction.

Strategic Plan Hierarchy

The Plan includes a hierarchy of elements that starts with the most macro level of strategy and moves to a more micro level (moving from strategic to tactical). The starting point for any strategic planning process is the review of the vision and mission. The mission and vision statements were changed from previous wording, simplified, and made more meaningful and memorable.

Subsequent to the development of mission and vision, initiatives and goals were developed. The Board members created the initiatives, refining them from the ones developed in 2007. Initiatives are very broad brushed descriptions of strategic direction. Goals describe what the District needs to do well in support of the initiatives. For example, one of the goals for the Customer Focus initiative is “Memorable Experiences.” Therefore, the District must identify ways to create these experiences.

The strategic objectives, developed by staff, support the strategic goals at a more micro level. Following along with the Customer Focus initiative, an example of an objective is: Develop methods to ensure consistent service delivery, such as the use of standards.

As evidenced from the sequence listed above, the objectives are more specific than the goals, and the goals are more specific than the initiatives.

A measurement system of key performance indicators follows the initiatives and goals. The measurement system reflects the District’s progress in completing the Strategic Initiatives. More specific than objectives are tactics. The tactics are detailed action steps that outline how each initiative will be accomplished. Tactics are very specific, lengthy in number, and are best developed year to year. As a result, tactics are not included within the Plan. They will be developed each year by staff for the current year objectives.

The Balanced Scorecard hierarchy is presented by the pyramid shown in the following figure.



Strategic Initiatives

In using the scorecard, the District has developed Strategic Initiatives that are broad-brushed organizational descriptions that provide direction. These initiatives follow the four perspectives: customer, financial, internal business, and learning and growth. The internal business perspective has two initiatives. The PDOP initiatives are:

CUSTOMER: Customer Focus

FINANCIAL: Financial Strength

INTERNAL BUSINESS: Maintain Infrastructure and Organizational Excellence

LEARNING AND GROWTH: Employee Excellence

Following the initiatives, goals were developed. The goals are aligned with the initiatives and demonstrate how the District will work toward its strategic direction. Goals are more specific elements of strategy that the District must do well in support of initiatives.

Goal Statements

The following section outlines the intended meaning of the Strategic Goals through brief narratives. This is to ensure common understanding of the intended meaning of each goal.

Customer Focus

MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES: Memorable experiences create loyal customers who continue using Park District services. These experiences are created by consistent and genuine first and last impressions, seamless service transactions, quality programs and services, and staff who strive to exceed expectations.

CUSTOMER LOYALTY: Loyalty is created through efforts in developing relationships with customers so that they will participate in Park District services year after year. Loyal customers re-purchase services and provide excellent word of mouth marketing for the District.

ANTICIPATING FUTURE NEED: Customer focused organizations are able to anticipate future needs of customers. This requires significant information about the District's customer base including analysis of existing needs. Additionally, the District will need to develop a systematic approach to identifying trends in the industry and the resultant changes in customer preferences.

Financial Strength

ALIGN RESOURCES EFFICIENTLY: Financial allocation of resources will be reviewed and aligned with community needs. Additionally, the District will continuously evaluate and improve processes in order to maximize productivity.

OPTIMIZE RETURN ON INVESTMENT: It takes considerable effort to provide programs and services. The District desires to yield a cost of recovery which allows programs and services to be re-offered and provide additional funding for staff and capital. The District should provide programs and services that reinforce the mission and create memorable experiences. Those programs not supporting the mission or not yielding a desired cost recovery should be discontinued.

SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS PLAN: Plans for operations should include financial and environmental benefits to the district. While it may be quickly apparent a program is not sustainable due to it having a negative net, it may provide a positive future environmental impact. The District should operate its facilities and programs in an environmentally friendly and financially positive manner. Revenue facilities should strive to maintain a net return allowing those operations to continue with minimal property tax support. In all operations the sustainability of a program should also include green initiatives resulting in lessened future environmental impact.

MAXIMIZE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES: The District desires to seek opportunities to grow revenues from non-tax sources such as grants, foundations and friends groups, effective pricing of services, and corporate contributions and sponsorships.

Maintain Infrastructure

SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES: One of the values of the District is sustainability. This isn't just specific to "green" practices. It refers to all District operations and the need for renewal, maintenance, sustenance, stewardship, and stability in all operational aspects.

PRO-ACTIVE AND SYSTEMATIC APPROACH: The District will strategically make decisions for the greater good of the community that will result in a purposeful approach to maintaining the District's infrastructure.

EVALUATION OF SYSTEMS: The District endeavors to evaluate the lifecycles of District assets through a complete and up to date asset inventory. This will assist the District with its efforts in the effective allocation of resources.

Organizational Excellence

SEEK SYNERGY: The vision statement refers to using a collaborative approach. In support of the vision, the District will continue building and strengthening partnerships, and will use a collaborative approach within the organization, creating synergy.

INNOVATIVE OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE: This includes the District's ability to adopt best practice approaches in operations. An important element of innovative operational excellence includes the ability to manage and improve critical processes. Streamlining processes includes the development of an improvement model and metrics to measure both organizational and departmental performance. The District also strives to emphasize learning contemporary practices from other agencies and within the District through information sharing.

LEVERAGE TECHNOLOGY: Along with the District's ability to continually drive innovation, the use of technology is critical. Technology will be used to improve District services and operations and will also be used to improve communication.

Employee Excellence

FOSTER A CULTURE OF INNOVATION: The District seeks to create a work culture that challenges the status quo and finds new ways of doing business, based on industry trends, staff involvement, and management sophistication, all in support of improving services.

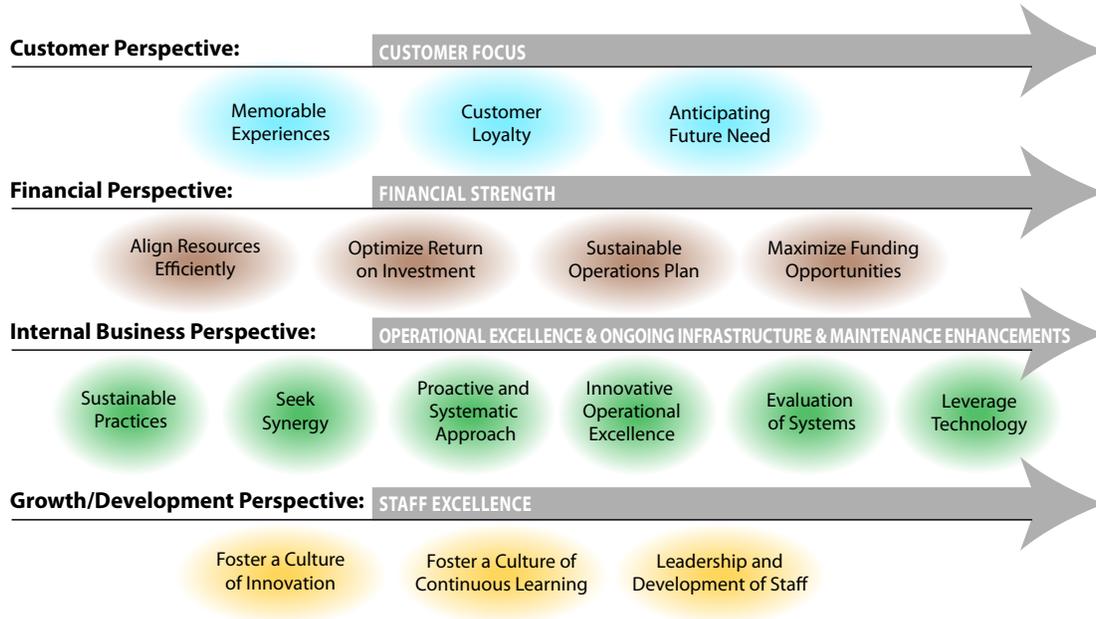
FOSTER A CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS LEARNING: In order to successfully implement strategic objectives, staff and Board members will continuously learn about the District, the community, and about areas of importance to successfully perform their jobs, including innovative practices, use of technology, recreation and park trends, leadership, sustainable practices, and becoming a strategy focused organization.

LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF: The most important asset of the District is the staff. The District desires to develop an excellent leadership system and will allocate resources in support of staff development. As a result, the District will encourage learning at all levels of the organization and will strategically develop learning opportunities for staff, in concert with organizational strategy.

Strategy Maps

The following figures depict the strategic initiatives and goals in a representation of a strategy map.

The role of Perspectives and Objectives in movement toward Strategy



Strategic Initiatives, Goals, and Objectives 2013-2015

The following are the initiatives, goals, and objectives for the next three years, 2013-2015. The year the objectives are to be developed and completed is listed next to each objective. Ongoing Goals are repeated continuously during the next three years.

Strategic Initiative: Customer Focus

Goal 1: Memorable Experiences

- Develop methods to ensure consistent service delivery, such as the use of standards 2013
- Determine customer expectations in key program and service areas, document, and train staff to exceed expectations 2014

Goal 2: Customer Loyalty

- Develop a systematic approach to measuring customer satisfaction; utilize results to enhance existing programs/services and/or add new ones 2013

Goal 3: Anticipating Future Need

- Review other agency strategic/comprehensive plans and incorporate any appropriate changes, based on their future direction 2013
- Create a process to identify underserved groups and determine the appropriateness and ability of the District to better meet their needs 2014
- Develop a process for identifying new trends, research their possibility, and implement into the program mix as appropriate to attract new customers as well as enhance existing customer's experience 2015

Strategic Initiative: Financial Strength

Goal 1: Align Resources Efficiently

- Complete an annual update of the capital improvement plan prior to the annual operational budget process Ongoing

Goal 2: Optimize Return on Investment

- Utilize fee policy to price programs and services appropriately 2013
- Analyze center operations and revise to meet new program objectives 2015

Goal 3: Sustainable Operations Plan

- Develop an asset management plan, including equipment and supply inventory management program 2015

Goal 4: Maximize Funding Opportunities

- Research, evaluate, and pursue grant opportunities Ongoing
- Update fee structure for facility/park rentals based on new facilities 2014

Strategic Initiative: Maintain Infrastructure

Goal 1: Sustainable Practices

- Implement field assessment/practices to improve the quality of maintenance and use of athletic fields 2013

Goal 2: Pro-active and Systematic Approach

- Develop an automated work order system 2013
- Establish/follow best practices for materials and maintenance 2014

Goal 3: Evaluation of Systems

- Create operation plans for revenue facilities 2013
- Update comprehensive plan and, as appropriate, align recommendations with other government entities' comprehensive plan 2015

Strategic Initiative: Organizational Excellence

Goal 1: Seek Synergy

- Annually review strategic plan Ongoing

Goal 2: Innovative Operational Excellence

- Submit applications for Distinguished Accreditation/CAPRA/Gold Medal 2013
- Develop a performance measurement system for month-to-month tracking 2013
- Develop minimum operating standards for program areas (aquatics, youth sports, etc.) 2014
- Create comprehensive volunteer engagement plan 2015

Goal 3: Leverage Technology

- Assess and analyze internal communication processes and determine methods of improvement 2014
- Provide Wi-Fi access to users of all PDOP parks and facilities 2015

Strategic Initiative: Employee Excellence

Goal 1: Foster a Culture of Innovation

- Create an organization culture of measure it, define it, grow toward it 2014

Goal 2: Foster a Culture of Continuous Learning

- Identify a training and development philosophy and establish a system for employees to learn, improve, and maintain skills 2013
- Develop documentation protocol (special events, seasonal activities – provides an historical perspective and a means to measure program area trends) 2014

Goal 3: Leadership and Development of Staff

- Develop a robust employee reward and recognition program that reinforces the mission, vision, and values of the District and contributes to the establishment of an innovative work environment 2015

PARKING LOT LISTING:

The following is a listing of other additional ideas for the strategic plan. Good plans take existing workloads into account in establishing the numbers of strategic objectives to complete each year. As a result, the following items are deemed to be good ideas for strategy, but will only develop as strategic objectives if time allows. Each year, as the District reviews upcoming priorities, this list will be reviewed and changed as appropriate.

- Develop a human resource plan that identifies future competencies and organizational structure
- Develop a three year technology plan for the District
- Develop an annual review process of recreation programs to determine their sustainability, and expand, reposition, or retrench, as appropriate
- Identify future skills needed for the organization, such as data analytics and identify how the District will acquire the needed skill sets
- Work with other governmental partner organizations and develop an Oak Park community vision process
- Develop a process to measure employee satisfaction

Implementation Guidelines

The following is a listing of suggestions for successful implementation of the Strategic Plan. It represents the commitment and discipline required to institutionalize the process.

- The Plan becomes the guidepost for the District. When decisions or responses to the community are needed, the Plan becomes the reference point for decision making and whether or not new issues or responses to the community are of higher importance than what's been established as existing direction.
- Include Strategic Plan information as part of the new Board member and employee orientation program.
- Post a summary or shortened version of the Plan on the Website and track results on the site as well. It may also be helpful to print a short summary of the Plan's progress to distribute to interested partners and community members and/or reference our progress in the annual report.
- A staff person or team should have responsibility of being the project manager of the Plan's implementation to ensure successful implementation. This staff person becomes the Champion of the Plan.
- Regular reporting of the Plan's progress should occur. Break the Plan into separate fiscal years and report one year at a time, as an ongoing annual work plan. Each objective for the year should include a list of tactics that support the goal's completion. The tactics are developed prior to each year. It is the project leader's responsibility to report on his/her goal, included in a monthly or quarterly report. A suggestion is to input each year's data on a spreadsheet that lists the Initiatives, Goals, and Objectives start date and completion date, and which staff person is responsible for the Initiative's completion.
- At the end of the year, perform an annual review and documentation of the initiatives.
- Update major stakeholders on the Plan's implementation and results on an annual basis.
- Conduct staff meetings on a quarterly or semi-annual basis to review the Plan's progress and results and report the Plan's progress to the Park Board on a quarterly basis.
- The performance appraisal process should reflect the completion of the Strategic Plan Initiatives as an evaluation criterion. Also, performance criteria should be aligned with values of the District such as innovation, teamwork, and accountability.
- Track the measurement system on a quarterly basis. Some of the measures will be calculated annually. Provide an annual narrative about the results. Review the inventory of measures on an annual basis and make adjustments as necessary to ensure the measures continuously add value to decision making. Include a combination of lagging and leading indicators. (Lagging indicators or outcomes measure past performance; leading indicators or performance drivers assist in establishing future performance.)



- After completion of the first year of the Plan and baseline results are quantified, targets should be initiated for the measurement system.
- There should be an annual just-in-time review of the next year's Initiatives to determine if priorities have changed. This can be included at an annual retreat in which successive years' objectives are discussed as part of the annual budget process. Objectives should tie into the budget process.
- Post a chart of each year's objectives on office walls in administrative areas with a check-off column designating completion as part of a visual management program. Staff meetings should regularly include discussion of strategy. This will help to emphasize the Plan's importance and the District's commitment to execution.
- After each year of the Plan, the staff should review the Plan's process and re-tool any parts of the process that need improvement.
- If there are ideas for new strategies that arise throughout the year, include them on a written "parking lot" and review them as part of the annual just-in-time review to determine if they supplant any existing initiatives.

Summary

The Park District of Oak Park Strategic Plan 2013-2015 represents the District's commitment to success in strategic planning endeavors. The vision of: ***"We strive to exceed the needs of our diverse community with a collaborative and innovative approach."*** will be the focus of future strategy.

In order to succeed in achieving the aspiration of exceeding needs, collaboration, and innovation, the District will focus its efforts in aligning the initiatives with the vision, as follows:

CUSTOMER FOCUS

FINANCIAL STRENGTH

MAINTAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE

The Strategic Plan will build on the great strengths of the organization, including its brand and image, transparency, partnerships, and quality services and programs. The District's strategic focus will also include taking advantage of opportunities for improvement, such as driving innovation, better use of technology, and capturing more customer information. This will result in the District being well positioned to fully utilize best practices in its service delivery system through operational and employee excellence.

Definitions

The following list of key words describes the definition of the terminology used for the Strategic Plan.

Mission—describes the business of the organization. The mission also defines the core purpose of the organization and why it exists.

Vision—desired future of the organization. The vision should be a “stretch” for the organization, but possible to achieve in approximately five years. It should state a measurable achievement.

Values—describe the way the District operates. Values are meaningful expressions of describing what is important in the way we treat our employees and our guests and relates to the internal culture of the organization.

Balanced Scorecard Perspectives—the four perspectives include Customer, Financial, Internal Business Process, and Learning and Growth. They demonstrate cause and effect relationships in the completion of strategy. All of the Strategic Initiatives are aligned with these four perspectives.

Strategic initiatives— broad brushed, macro-oriented organizational sense of direction that relates to the four Balanced Scorecard perspectives of customer, financial, internal business, and growth and development.

Strategic Goals—concise statements describing the specific elements an organization must do well in order to execute its strategy.

Measures—a standard used to evaluate and communicate performance against expected results. Measures are normally quantitative indicators and capture numbers, dollars, percentages, etc. Measures assist the staff with the ability to determine organizational performance.

Strategic Objectives—the specific programs, activities, projects, or actions an organization will undertake in an effort to meet performance targets. The strategic initiatives are specifically detailed with specific tactics, which are not included within the body of the Strategic Plan, but will exist in separate documentation.

Tactics—Tactics are not included as part of the Plan. The development occurs after the Plan’s implementation. Tactics are subordinate to the initiatives and detail the steps necessary to complete an initiative. Staff members will identify the tactics for the initiatives before the start of each fiscal year.