



Strategic Plan

2015 – 2018



foxvalleyparkdistrict.org

Introduction

The Fox Valley Park District Strategic Plan 2014-2017 provides direction and a planned pursuit of the mission, vision, key strategies, goals and actions of the District from May 1, 2014, through April 30, 2017. The plan reflects the District's increasing responsiveness and sophistication, moving the District into a greater strategic planning direction and less tactical mode, which is the next logical step in the organization's life cycle and planning evolution. Strategic planning is a systematic approach to defining longer term business goals and identifying the means to achieve them. It provides the District with the ability to channel resources in a direction that yields the greatest benefit to resident taxpayers, constituents and guests.

The intent of the plan is to identify long-term goals that align business activities to the strategy of the District. It provides a framework to ensure that a balanced approach toward addressing goals of District residents, finances, internal processes and learning and growth of employees is integrated into the plan. The strategic planning process enables the District to plan and execute continuous improvements throughout the organization. It is supplemented by annual departmental work plans and major initiatives identified during the annual budget process.

The benefits of strategic planning include:

- Focuses the District's resources on activities that are essential to increasing customer satisfaction, lowering costs, increasing taxpayer value and achieving measurable outcomes.
- Creates a planning and implementation system that is responsive, flexible and disciplined.
- Encourages cooperation and support among all Park District departments.
- Reinforces the continuous improvement environment of the District.
- Empowers managers and employees by providing them with the authority to fulfill planned activities.
- Eliminates non-core activities.
- Provides for more seamless internal and external customer service.
- Defines and describes the District's key strategies. As a result, employees and residents know where the District is headed.

The primary approach used in the development, preparation and periodic evaluation of this plan involves the incorporation of continual participation, assessment, input and public opinion research from the community at large, Park District participants, stakeholder groups, affiliate organizations, board and staff on a variety of levels.

Community Input

- The District conducts statistically significant scientific research through a community interest and attitude survey of residents at a minimum of once every 5 to 6 years. The confidence level for this research is at the 95% level.
- Special surveys and polls also are periodically conducted to gather input on major District initiatives and developments.
- Stakeholder input is factored into the development of the District's master plan.
- Neighborhood and Homeowner Association focus groups are formed regularly to gather input on neighborhood and community park and playground development.
- Athletic affiliate groups partner with the District to provide regular input on the development and maintenance of athletic fields and athletic programs on a formal and informal basis.
- Participants are surveyed at the completion of programs and broad-scale program surveys are conducted seasonally to gain input for developing programs and events.
- The District conducts open houses, forms special advisory groups and task forces, and sponsors question-and-answer forums to gather input relating to various District initiatives, programs and facilities.
- The District obtains ongoing input through community partnerships and relationships with educational institutions, local agencies and service clubs, government agencies, and park, recreation and open space professionals.
- The District conducts independent, professionally prepared market research and economic feasibility studies to determine trends and for current and future community needs assessment. Specific examples of these include: Stuart Sports Complex Economic Feasibility Study, Blackberry Farm Market Research Analysis and Study, the Orchard Valley Golf Course Facility Evaluation and Aquatics Feasibility Study.
- The District cooperates with other independent stakeholder groups that conduct their own public opinion and community assessment data collection through statistically significant scientific research to assist in developing long-range plans.
- The District makes community and service club presentations regarding long-range plans for major capital improvement initiatives that are financed primarily through voter-approved referendums.

Board of Trustee Input

- Annually, the Board of Trustees reviews, discusses and approves the District’s budget development guidelines.
- The Board of Trustees conducts an annual budget workshop to review District accomplishments from the prior fiscal year, major initiatives for the upcoming fiscal year, shifts in spending, revenue and human resources along with an extensive capital improvement plan.
- The Board of Trustees adopts an annual budget, providing the foundation for the District’s annual spending and work plans along with major initiatives.
- Feasibility and master plan studies are presented, evaluated and reviewed by the Board of Trustees.
- Each year, the Board of Trustees reviews, provides input and adopts the District’s updated Strategic Plan.
- Accomplishments are presented and reviewed with the Board of Trustees during the review and adoption of the annual budget.

Staff Input

- The District Management Team—consisting of department heads, division and facility managers—participates in an annual retreat to discuss and review goals and objectives aligning with District key strategies.
- Through the budget development process, each Department develops major initiatives and objectives for annual work plans, incorporating input from staff at each location and specialty area.
- Staff develops annual work plans with input from program participants, survey results, focus groups, and formal planning studies.
- Through the District’s adopted performance appraisal system, staff’s “Current Goals from Last Evaluation” are evaluated on a bi-annual basis. Annual merit increases are based upon ratings in this category and many other categories.

Definition of Terms

Several important terms are used throughout the Strategic Plan, which may not always have universally accepted definitions. The following definitions are provided so readers may better understand the intent of the terms used in the plan.

Mission Statement: A concise statement of the District’s reason for being. It defines the business that the District is in.

Vision: Describes the desired future of the District and what it seeks to become. It is an audacious goal that is tangible, energizing and highly focused.

Core Values: A set of guiding principles that the District stands for and believes. Values are principles to be observed in meeting the vision.

Key Strategies: Means to achieve the vision. Strategies are usually few (4 to 6) and define what key success factors the organization must pursue.

Goals: Timeless, unbounded statements describing the conditions or attributes to be attained. They are aligned with the key strategies.

Objectives: Measurable, attainable milestones to achieve on the way to accomplishing the goal. Objectives are referred to as long term (3 to 5 years) or short term (1 to 2 years). These are specific and measurable.

Deployment Plan: To turn vision into action, the vision must be broken apart and translated into successively smaller and specific parts into a departmental and individual level. The distribution and communication of the plan is referred to as the deployment plan. This often takes the form of timelines and more specific project and actions plans.

Fox Valley Park District Mission Statement

Enrich our community with fun, diverse and safe park and recreation experiences through environmentally and fiscally responsible actions.

Vision

A legacy of innovative leadership in parks, recreation, and open space.

Core Values

Embrace Diversity

Of our community
Of our programs and facilities
Of our team members and job variety

Respect and Treat People the Way You Wish to be Treated

Understand and Forgive

To err is human; to forgive is divine

Value our Most Important Resource – Each Other

Enjoy Life and Celebrate our Achievements

Key Strategies

2015 – 2018



Key Strategy 1: Build Community and Customer Loyalty

Goal A: Provide safe, distinctive and well-maintained parks and facilities.

Short-Term Objectives 2015-16

1. Develop a repositioning plan for Splash Country Water Park.
2. Develop plan to phase in improvements at Phillips Park Aquatic Center.
3. Complete the construction of the Prisco Community Center expansion and renovation.
4. Implement site improvement plans for Red Oak Nature Center and Blackberry Farm.
5. Develop plans to furnish Stuart Sports Complex with features to attract athletic tournaments.
6. Develop a plan for maintaining/renovating Eola Community Center outdoor trellis structures.

Long-Term Objectives

1. Implement ADA improvement plans in accordance with the district's transition plan. 2015-18
2. Implement neighborhood and community park renovation projects based upon playground and facility replacement needs and schedules. 2015-18
3. Continue park and trail renovations and athletic field improvements according to replacement schedules. 2015-18
4. Identify opportunities for improved trail connectivity. 2015-18
5. Investigate the feasibility of creating grade separation between trails and busy roadways within the district to improve upon public access and safety. 2015-17
6. Develop a plan for the renovation of Stuart Sports Complex north. 2015-17
7. Evaluate site plan and use of space at Eola Community Center. 2016-18

Goal B: Provide diverse and innovative programs and events.

Short-Term Objectives 2015-16

1. Develop comprehensive programming plans to coincide with priorities identified in the community needs assessment in:
 - a. Adult Fitness and Wellness
 - b. Youth Sports
 - c. Aquatics and Learn to Swim Programs
 - d. Senior and Active Adult Programs
 - e. Nature and Camp Programs

Long-Term Objectives

1. Develop a plan to host a new major event on district property that has a regional draw. 2016-18
2. Research needs and identify partnership opportunities to offer additional after school programs to be hosted at various school sites. 2016-18

Goal C: Develop and maintain positive cooperative relationships and partnerships.

Short-Term Objectives 2015-16

1. Develop ad hoc committee with school athletic representatives to collaborate on the expansion of athletic leagues and programs.
2. Partner and collaborate with local agencies and organizations to provide recreation program experiences.
3. Coordinate with the City of Aurora on the use and management of river shoreline property.
4. Coordinate with the City of Aurora on strategic intergovernmental property exchanges.

Long-Term Objectives

1. Collaborate with the City of Aurora and local agencies on the evaluation of using district community centers as disaster relief sites in the event of a comprehensive emergency. 2016-18
2. Coordinate with the City of Aurora on the acquisition and development of strategic open space opportunities within planning areas with neighborhood park open space deficiencies. 2015-17
3. Coordinate with the City of Aurora on the implementation of the Eola Road/Montgomery Road/Middlebury East Park regional trail. 2015-17

Goal D: Provide excellent two-way public communication.

Short-Term Objectives 2015-16

1. Develop and implement a customer reward/loyalty program.
2. Complete signage updates at Blackberry Farm and Stuart Sports Complex.
3. Refine website updates and expand use of social media communications.

Long-Term Objectives

1. Update the district video to contain information on the district’s history and new accomplishments. 2016-17
2. Develop a secret shopper program. 2016-17
3. Develop plan for adding kiosks at identified trail head sites to promote cross marketing of facilities and programs. 2015-17

Key Strategy 2: Conserve Energy, Natural Resources and Promote Sustainability

Goal A: Acquire and preserve key natural assets.

Short-Term Objectives 2015-16

1. Implement site-specific woodlands management plans for Lippold Park, Red Oak Nature Center, Chesterfield Park, Church Road Park and Arrowwood Park.
2. Implement the Emerald Ash Borer replacement plan.
3. Coordinate with the City of Aurora on the management of lakes and ponds.

Long-Term Objectives

1. As feasible, incorporate natural features into the design and construction of nature-based play areas. 2015-18
2. Identify and evaluate key sites for potential land acquisition in accordance with the district’s Open Space and Revitalization Initiative, and Land Acquisition Goals and Guidelines. 2015-18

Goal B: Incorporate sustainability in planning, development and operations.

Short-Term Objectives 2015-16

1. Develop energy use guidelines and protocol within facilities to reduce energy consumption during peak volume and demand.
2. Apply the district's Sustainable Design Considerations checklist for parks and facilities to the design and construction of capital projects.

Long-Term Objectives

1. Identify opportunities to utilize "green infrastructure" in the design and construction of storm water management systems. 2015-18
2. Identify opportunities to expand the scope of nature-based play to include natural features and sustainability related interpretive interactives and signage. 2015-17
3. Create public information exhibits for community centers describing district-related sustainability efforts. 2016-18

Key Strategy 3: Strengthen Financial Performance

Goal A: Reduce reliance upon tax revenues.

Short-Term Objectives 2015-16

1. Expand use of volunteers and sponsorships.
2. Develop and implement business and promotional strategy to maximize revenue potential for Stuart Sports Complex.

Long-Term Objectives

1. Determine indirect costs for services and review Revenue and Fee Policy. 2015-17
2. Develop plan to reduce cost of participant program supplies. 2016-17

Goal B: Ensure appropriate funding availability for operations, maintenance and capital projects.

Short-Term Objectives 2015-16

1. Develop a plan for the selection, implementation and funding of a new recreation software system.
2. Evaluate need for expanded garage and storage space at the Park District Police and Public Safety facility and determine source of funding.
3. Develop options for the 2015 tax levy regarding capital funding.

Long-Term Objectives

1. Implement GASB 68 accounting for pension reporting. 2015-17

Key Strategy 4: Achieve Excellence in Organizational Planning, Administration & Operations

Goal A: Create and maintain comprehensive plans.

Short-Term Objectives 2015-16

1. Develop plan for Healthcare Reform requirements.
2. Develop a recruitment plan to ensure that, due to attrition, open law enforcement positions are promptly filled.
3. Develop plan to implement new elected officials legislation.

Long-Term Objectives

1. Develop a long-range plan for the GIS system. 2015-17
2. Develop a post disaster recovery plan. 2015-18

Goal B: Improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Short-Term Objectives 2015-16

1. Develop and implement the use of key measure reports for seasonal operations, memberships, programming and facility use.
2. Improve customer experience at Orchard Valley Golf Course and Restaurant.
3. Implement Munis HR Training module.
4. Update and implement the district-wide technology enhancement, replacement and procurement plan.
5. Prepare for CALEA reaccreditation.
6. Investigate options for multi-year reporting through Munis financial software system.
7. Develop a summarized annual financial document.
8. Evaluate squad car video software and implement technology that downloads images efficiently

Long-Term Objectives

1. Develop plan for copier and postage lease renewal. 2015-17
2. Evaluate the feasibility of entering work requests through Manager Plus online. 2015-17
3. Investigate the feasibility of linking work order requests to the GIS system. 2015-17
4. Evaluate the feasibility of making park reservations online. 2016-18
5. Develop informational reports utilizing PRORAGIS data to compare the Fox Valley Park District to other districts, locally and nationally. 2015-17

Key Strategy 5: Enrich Employee Work Environment

Goal A: Develop employee skills, abilities and knowledge.

Short-Term Objectives 2015-16

1. Deliver "Frontline" GEM training.
2. Develop curriculum for continuation of Leadership Academy.
3. Develop multi-year training and education plans for staff.
4. Provide training for the enhanced law enforcement records management system.
5. Provide NIMS 200 training for emergency responders.

Long-Term Objectives

1. Develop quality standards and train team members on the incorporation of the approach in program and event planning. 2017-18
2. Through frontline GEM training, evaluate opportunities to engage customers and generate increased program/ membership participation. 2016-18

Goal B: Maintain employee satisfaction and loyalty.

Short-Term Objectives 2015-16

1. Review full-time salary ranges and make recommendations to the board.
2. Provide employees information on health and wellness to help improve employee health, lessen occupational injuries, reduce absences and increase productivity.

Long-Term Objectives

1. Review part-time wage ranges and make recommendations to the board. 2016-17

Goal C: Improve upon inter-departmental relationships, communication and support.

Short-Term Objectives 2015-16

1. Pilot a "lunch bunch" roundtable discussion to share district news on projects, plans and programs.
2. Formalize a work flow process where affected departments sign off at various stages of project development and implementation.

Key Strategy 6: Enhance Public and Employee Safety and Security

Goal A: Provide the safest possible environment for the public and employees.

Short-Term Objectives 2015-16

1. Prepare district for Loss Control review by PDRMA.
2. Research opportunities for safety related grants.
3. Develop an intergovernmental emergency response plan for Stuart Sports Complex.
4. Research installing backup warning devices on park district vehicles.

Goal B: Increase safety awareness throughout the District.

Short-Term Objectives 2015-16

1. Enhance the summer playground program to interact with public safety personnel regularly.
2. Update the Park Police and Public Safety website page quarterly.



Fox Valley Park District

101 W. Illinois Ave.

Aurora, IL 60506

Phone: 630-897-0516

Website: foxvalleyparkdistrict.org