# II. Executive Summary

The Vernon Hills Park Board sought to prepare a tangible, flexible planning instrument that identifies priorities for providing recreational opportunities to people of all abilities in Vernon Hills. In addition, the document is to identify and plan for the various possible funding options for acquisitions and development of parks and open space, and plan for long term enhancements and maintenance of the variety of park facilities throughout the District. The following outlines the recommendations and approach resulting from this planning process:

* The District prepared an Inventory of the recreational resources available to the residents. This Inventory included amenities both offered by the Park District and other outside sources that were free to all residents.
* An Analysis/Evaluation was prepared of the quantity of various resources available and compared to the current and projected future population of the District, and then analyzed against National Standards for similar resources offered on a “per thousand” population basis. For example- National Standards recommends districts provide 1 soccer field per 2,000 residents, Vernon Hills currently offers 1 soccer field per 2,000 residents.
* The entire Park District System was evaluated with respect to quantities of facilities offered as compared to National Standards and identified any shortfalls in facilities.
* A Resident Input Survey was conducted in 2009 via phone survey, contacting 4,000 residents. Input was recorded and tabulated, with a summation of the input regarding the levels of satisfaction and expectations or needs identified from each participant.
* The information obtained from the District Analysis and the Resident Input Survey was combined, resulting in the District Wide Recommendations. These recommendations identified everything from the need for additional bathrooms to having more lighted walking trails and offering more adult fitness programs.
* Input from staff, user groups and the Park Board helped develop a listing of Priorities for the implementation of the District Recommendations. These were assembled into fiscal years, based upon estimated costs for the implementation of the improvements. They were then balanced against the expected available annual capital funds available for these improvements.
* Finally, a 2010 financial plan for the funding of these recommended improvements was prepared.
* Please note that this plan intends that the Priorities and the Financial Plan will be re-evaluated each year during the preparation of the Park District Annual Budget preparation process. The available capital resources, combined with any new opportunities that may arise, should be considered during the preparation of the budget preparation process.

The following summarizes the resulting Master Plan/Strategic Plan (2010)

* The quantity of playgrounds seems adequate for the current population, with the specific exception of the area of Gregg's Landing.
* Expansion of the Family Aquatic Facility with either more slides, a deep diving well, Interactive Water Spray Park and a themed process throughout the facility.
* Expansion of the Community Center to include additional gymnasium space and expanded fitness equipment facilities.
* Provide additional walking, jogging and biking trails within the Park District system.
* Provide shade structures at every playground, and shade opportunities within the larger parks.
* Provide more convenient restroom facilities within the parks.
* Provide more convenient parking for the parks.
* Parking lot resurfacing at Sullivan Community Center.
* Research expansion or addition of Park Maintenance Facility, or new building for Park Maintenance Facility.

The 2014-2018 Priorities focus on some maintenance items necessary from the past years planning and items committed prior to the completion of the Master Plan.  Those included:

* Installing new spray features at the Family Aquatic Center – Completed spring 2015
* Shoreline stabilization for Century Park (natural plantings only)  - Completed summer 2014, 2015

**Master Plan Specifically Identified Priorities Included:**

* Enhancing outfield/sideline baseball fencing at 2 to 3 fields per year – Completed Century Park ballfields 2014 and Deerpath Ballfields 2017
* Enhance landscaping throughout Century Park in a yearly program – Ongoing commitment commencing spring 2015 to current
* Perform tennis court repairs at Deerpath Park – Completed spring 2017
* Fitness equipment replacement at Lakeview Fitness Center – annually since 2014 equipment is replaced/upgraded
* Locker room enhancements at Lakeview Fitness Center – Completed summer 2015

**Master Plan Specifically Identified Priorities Included:**

* Install playground and park improvements at Grosse Pointe, Stone Fence, Century Park North and Augusta Parks – Completed playground replacements at Grosse Pointe 2016, Stone Fence 2015, Augusta 2015.
* Tennis court lighting at Deerpath Park or Vernon Hills High School – This item is ongoing conversation with neighborhood and school district
* Review future enhancements of facility additions at Sullivan Community Center and Lakeview Fitness Center – Sullivan Center renovation/addition completed in winter 2017, Lakeview Fitness Center renovations completed in Fall 2014.

Planning additional annual Priorities are shown in that section of the Master Plan, but are not shown here. Beyond two years, there is probability that some refinement to the Master Plan Priorities will occur; therefore they are not listed in the Executive Summary.