



Vernon Hills Park District Strategic Plan 2020-2024

PLAY LONGER, LIVE STRONGER



OUR VISION

Addressing the life long
leisure needs of all
Vernon Hills residents.

Our Mission

Our mission is to promote diverse
community based recreational
opportunities by providing a
variety of programs, services,
facilities and natural spaces to
enhance the quality of life for our
residents.

Introduction

The Vernon Hills Park District (VHPD) partnered with Carol Sente Consulting LLC to lead and facilitate their 2020-2024 Strategic Planning effort with the entire full-time professional staff and park board. The objective of the Plan was to identify Strategic Areas of Focus and specific goals to provide strategic direction to the District for the coming five years. The Strategic Plan includes both external goals focused on improvements to the District's Programs, Parks, Customer Service, Marketing, and Facilities as well as internal efforts focused on the Team, all for the benefit of the District's residents and customers.

To conduct the Strategic Plan, five workshops were held with the VHPD staff and park board where the District's mission, vision and core values were reviewed; strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) were developed; and six strategic areas of focus with 20 specific goals were identified by the team.

An online Community-wide Survey was conducted by Jarrod Scheunemann of Campfire Concepts which received an impressive 1,174 responses, providing a rich pool of data which informed many of the goals decided upon by the District. The 34-question survey focused on participation, satisfaction and areas for expansion and/or improvement. Respondents' satisfaction levels were very high and ¼ provided additional written comments with Overall Satisfaction: 87%, satisfaction of Outdoor Spaces: 87%, Courtesy and Helpfulness of Staff: 83% and Level of Safety: 80%. Results from the 2019 Community-Wide Survey were also compared to the 2015 survey for trends.





Our Strategic Areas of Focus

#1- PROGRAMS: Based on Patron Feedback, Expand Programs and Services to Better Serve Interests

#2- PARKS: Retain Our Community Jewel- the Vernon Hills Parks

#3- CUSTOMER SERVICE: Continually Improve our Customers' Experiences with our District

#4- MARKETING: Expand District's Marketing to Continually Find New Ways to Communicate Offerings to Help Residents Make Informed Selections

#5- FACILITIES: Strengthen our Key Facilities' Ability to Meet Community Needs and Identify Niche Markets, Branding and Marketing

#6- TEAM: Continuing to Invest in our Team So They Enjoy Their Role and It Breeds More Team Cohesiveness and Enthusiasm



STRATEGIC AREA #1: PROGRAMS

Based on Patron Feedback, Expand Programs and Services to Better Serve Interests

- **Goal 1.1 Establish Partnerships to Deliver More Programs to New & Existing Customers**
- **Goal 1.2 Expand Current Program Enrollment**
- **Goal 1.3 Increase Community-Requested Programs including Active Adults, Teens, and Evening/Weekend Programs**
- **Goal 1.4 Increase Awareness of the District's Scholarship Program**
- **Goal 1.5 Revisit the District's Tax vs. Fee Pricing Strategy for Residents and Non-Residents**





STRATEGIC AREA #2: PARKS

Retain Our Community Jewel – the Vernon Hills Parks

- **Goal 2.1 Create a Long-Term Plan for an Internal and External Trail System**
- **Goal 2.2 Develop a Replacement Plan for Gazebos and Shelters Utilizing the Memorial Program, Donations, and Sponsors**
- **Goal 2.3 Investigate a Dog Event for Our Dog-Owning Constituents**



STRATEGIC AREA #3: CUSTOMER SERVICE

Continually Improve Our Customers' Experiences with Our District

- **Goal 3.1 Improve Our Customers' Online and In-Person Service Experience**
- **Goal 3.2 Expand Customer Appreciation Efforts**



Vernon Hills PARK DISTRICT



WINTER PROGRAM GUIDE
GET MOVING
THIS SEASON!

2019
Resident Registration:
December 4
Non-Resident Registration:
December 11

STRATEGIC AREA #4: MARKETING

Expand District's Marketing to Continually Find New Ways to Communicate Offerings to Help Residents Make Informed Selections

- **Goal 4.1 Expand Communication Methods to Increase Awareness of Offerings**
- **Goal 4.2 Create a Lakeview Fitness Website**
- **Goal 4.3 Create a Lakeview Childcare App**
- **Goal 4.4 Communicate Park District's Fiscal Responsibility and Value to Community**





STRATEGIC AREA #5 : FACILITIES

Strengthen Our Key Facilities' Ability to Meet Community Needs and Identify Niche Markets, Branding and Marketing

- **Goal 5.1 Create Renewed Excitement for the Family Aquatic Center**
- **Goal 5.2 Clarify Sullivan Center's Purpose and Offerings and Increase Marketing of Center**
- **Goal 5.3 Market, Promote and Continue to Invest in Lakeview Fitness in Order to Capture a Larger Piece of Community's Fitness Market**



STRATEGIC AREA #6 : TEAM

Continue to Invest in our Team So They Enjoy Their Role and It Breeds More Team Cohesiveness and Enthusiasm

- **Goal 6.1 Enhance Internal Team Communication**
- **Goal 6.2 Invest in Employee Recruitment and Retention**
- **Goal 6.3 Understand Individual Staff Member's Contributions to the Park District to Build a Culture of Support and Respect**



IMPLEMENTATION

In executing the Strategic Plan, the following action items will occur:

- 1. All employees will receive a copy of the Plan or electronic access to the Plan.**
- 2. A timeline identifying short, mid and long term goals will be created.**
- 3. To promote transparency, the Plan will be posted on the District Website.**
- 4. Staff meetings will be held on a quarterly basis to review the Plan's progress.**
- 5. The Plan's progress will be reported to the Board on an annual basis.**
- 6. The Plan's progress will be recorded on the Agency's Annual Report Card.**
- 7. After each year of the plan, the Staff and Board will review the Plan process and identify any parts of the process that need improvement/updating.**

