



# Strategic Plan Review

**COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC  
& MASTER PLAN UPDATE**

2009-2014      2016-2020  
Year Four Accomplishments to the  
Board of Park Commissioners 2019      2021-2025



# Strategic Planning Team Update

## February 19, 2020

Strategic Planning Team Update

- I. Welcome
  - Mission Vision Values
  - Avenues of Accountability
  
- II. 2016-2019 Strategic Plan Charters - Final Report
  - Measurement, Survey & Analysis
  - Board, Partnership, and Community Engagement
  - Internal Communication Excellence
  - Program & Recreation Services
  - Facility Planning for Profit & Sustainability
  - Greening Your Park District
  - Parks & Open Space (Master Planning)



## **Mission**

- To enrich the quality of community life through a diversity of healthy leisure pursuits and heightened appreciation for our natural world.

## **Vision**

- We, the Wheaton Park District team, commit to service excellence, financial stability, and an enriched quality of life for our stakeholders. We accomplish this through continuous improvement of people and systems while living our values.

## **Values**

- Integrity | Fun | Adaptability & Growth | Commitment | Kindness | Service



## **Avenues of Accountability**

- 1. Sustainability Makes Sense**
- 2. Investing in People**
- 3. Doing Things Better and Smarter**
- 4. Ensuring Excellence and Satisfaction**



# Measurement, Survey & Analysis

## **Project Sponsors**

- Kristina Nemetz, Superintendent of Marketing and Special Events
- Bruce Stoller, Director of Golf

## **Team Members**

- Mark Dolphin, Athletic Manager
- Diane Hirshberg, Human Resources Manager
- Michelle Podkova, Museum Manager and Educator
- Randy Tucker, Accounting Supervisor
- Trish Whelan, Web Developer

## **Goal Statement:**

To devise and execute a plan of periodic measurement to gather feedback and track progress. This framework will be used to measure the effectiveness of the District's direction and objectives. This will be accomplished through the efficient collection and analysis of data to allow for consistent follow up with all stakeholders.



# Measurement, Survey & Analysis

## Year Four Accomplishments

- Survey questions added specifically to gather information for individual charters and to collect feedback on how to improve communication through all levels of the organization.
- Staff surveyed in January and February 2019.
- Manager surveys completed in March 2019.
- Results were presented to the team in September 2019. The team worked with UIC to finalize results in October and November 2019.
- The committee has been collecting email addresses from employees so that 2020 surveys can be done via email. This will allow for more flexibility for staff and we hope it allows for more responses from employees at all levels of the organization.
- Final results from 2019 will be presented to Department Heads in early 2020 and results will be bound and available as a resource for staff to review within each department and online within the Intranet.



# Measurement, Survey & Analysis

## Summary of Impact on Agency Culture

- The charter was created to provide stakeholders the opportunity to give feedback, and to disseminate the information gathered throughout the district so it could be used to positively influence future direction. The input gathered has been used to guide the work of other charters and has led to improvements in things such communication and employee recognition.
- The survey format, content, delivery method and reach has been constantly evaluated and allowed to evolve in order to better meet the needs of the District and the employees.
  - The survey has been shortened to make it less time consuming
  - Specific questions have been added to gather information for particular charter groups
  - Questions were added to address communication which has consistently been the most common area of concern
  - Taking the survey started with scheduled times, evolved to a drop-in format and will now be completed 100% on-line with a Spanish language version available in order to make it as easy as possible for more employees to take part.
  - The ability for seasonal employees to take part in the survey process has been added in order to gather feedback from employees who may work a large number of hours in a shorter period of time.



# Board, Partnership & Community Engagement

## **Project Sponsor**

- Donna Siciliano – Executive Assistant

## **Team Members**

- Margie Wilhelmi – Director of Marketing
- Rob Sperl – Director of Parks & Planning
- Deb Ditchman – Environmental Education Supervisor
- Gina Catalano – Marketing & Communications Assistant
- Matthew Nations – Assistant Golf Professional
- Cristin Handlon – Cultural Arts & Varied Interest Supervisor
- Adam Lewandowski – Athletic Manager
- Matthew Wrobel – Adult Education & Recreation Supervisor

## **Goal Statement:**

To draft a plan that will produce results in improving the communication and engagement with board, partners and the community. This plan will include the development of a formal template for partnerships, extension of recreational opportunities for residents “Leisureship Program”, and a proactive approach for improving communication.





# Board, Partnership & Community Engagement

## **Year Four Accomplishments**

- Installed TV's at the Community Center promoting district events
- Distributing program guides at City Hall for residents
- Installed phone message on district phones promoting events and giving information about our parks and facilities for people to hear while they are on hold.



# Board, Partnership & Community Engagement

## Summary of Impact on Agency Culture

Over the past four years, the team was successful in accomplishing the overall objectives of the charter. The team identified where improvements could be made and/or any new programs or initiatives that could be implemented. The results of this charter has made a strong impact on the district and its culture because it provided staff, from many different departments and department levels, to share their ideas and see them come to fruition. In summary, the following highlights the outcomes of those improvements and new programs.

- Development of FREE Library at Cosley Zoo and coordinating ongoing donation from Wheaton Library
- Concentrating on our social media presence and regular posting which has resulted in up to a 50% increase in followers
- Utilizing our email software to send responsive emails to people that sign up for our e-newsletters. To date, we've distributed over 200 emails with a 60% open rate.
- Installed television monitor at community center that highlights upcoming programs and events for the thousands of visitors at the community center.
- Quarterly emails to partners and sponsors which tells the story of what is happening at the park district. As a result, we received feedback from at least 3 organizations that wanted to learn more about a capital project or special event.



# Internal Communication Excellence

## Project Sponsors

- Deb Seymour, Superintendent of Parks

## Team Members

- Mark Dolphin, Athletic Manager
- Angela Doromal, Administrative Assistant Parks
- Toni Giovenco, Athletic Manager
- Becky Mendenhall, Human Resources Associate
- Carey Moreland, Marketing & Development Coordinator
- Rick Napier, Daytime Community Center Manager
- Nick Parisi, Administrative Assistant to Athletics
- Sandra Simpson, Finance Manager
- Beth Slager, Customer Service Attendant/Cash Handler
- Trish Whelan, Web Developer
- Rafael Zavala, Trim Crew Leader

## Goal Statement:

Working together to provide focused communication for all employees to be heard and being an agency role model of positive behavior and attitude.



# Internal Communication Excellence

## Year Four Accomplishments

- New Hire Orientation, including presentation by executive director offered six times a year for all new employees and anyone else who may want or needs a refresher.
- Surveys are continually sent to new employees asking for feedback from first days on the job. “How are we doing?” Results consistently come back that the culture of the district exceeds expectations.
- New hire parks and facilities tour are held three times yearly for employees.
- Leadership Academy continues with new 3<sup>rd</sup> year training, and second year training with in-house trainers.
- Drone tours of highly used parks were completed and will be put on website for sharing
- 360 room tours and park rentals are in the process of completion and will be linked appropriately on website
- An interdepartmental contact directory was created to streamline who does what within departments for the front desk. Especially useful in athletics and park rentals.
- Looking at software that can be used globally called TEAMS which is a Microsoft program that combines persistent workplace chat, video meetings, file storage, and application integration for the district.



# Internal Communication Excellence

## Summary of Impact on Agency Culture

Internal communication deficits throughout the district have improved over the past 4 years according to surveys and the overall culture of the agency consistently exceeds expectations. The following avenues were developed and are now part of the agencies culture.

- One Note communication software implemented in all departments
- New Hire Orientation for employees were executed six times a year with a clear concise message to all. In addition the executive director is now an integral part of this message.
- New employee van tours are held three times a year spring, summer and fall to any employee to provide an overview of many parks and facilities throughout the agency.
- Surveys are confidentially sent to New Hire Orientation participants to evaluate their on-boarding experience. The returns consistently are positive and show communication is a significant portion of the culture within the district.
- Leadership Academy was implemented to fulfill a need to invest in staff and improve the culture and behaviors in a positive direction. Year 3 is nearly complete and staff are now training the next tier of leaders.
- Internal communication directories were created to share with front line staff to distinguish who is responsible for what roles to reduce the transference of calls from one person to another.
- Drone video, aerial photography, and 360° tours were used to capture and share the amenities and features of park district playgrounds, athletic fields, shelters, green space, rental facilities and more. Media was published to the [wheatonparkdistrict.com](http://wheatonparkdistrict.com) site and to Google My Business listings as a resource for patrons and front line staff.



# Program & Recreation Services

## **Project Sponsor**

- Vicki Beyer, Director of Recreation

## **Team Members**

- Michelle Artis, Parks Plus Fitness Center Manager
- Mark Dolphin, Athletic Manager
- Becky Egan, Lincoln Marsh Program Assistant
- Cristin Handlon, Creative Arts & Varied Interest Supervisor
- Terra Johnson, Lincoln Marsh Program Manager
- Dana Mitchell, Data Administrative Coordinator
- Kelly Nielsen, Preschool Coordinator
- Megann Panek, MLC Manager
- Tami Romejko, Cosley Zoo Education & Guest Experiences Manager
- Sheri Rovanseck, Kidz Kingdom Attendant
- Amy Seklecki, Marketing/Special Event Coordinator

## **Goal Statement:**

To improve our programming reach, balance and frequency of use in ways that benefit, encourage and promote lifelong leisure.



# Program & Recreation Services

## Year Four Accomplishments

- Maintained district-wide cancellation rate of 16%; 3% decrease from 2018
- Quarterly cancellation rate and facility usage reports distributed to managers/supervisors
- Completed Facility Space Catalog
- Created dedicated intranet tab for resources
- Completed guidelines/priorities/timeline for securing space at the Community Center.
- Charter team members to present “The Secret to Effective Programming Strategies” at the 2020 IPRA State Conference.
- Program Manager Resource Manual - completed September 2019/available on intranet
- Charter transitioned to a district committee - January 2020



# Program & Recreation Services

## Summary of Impact on Agency Culture

- Decreased cancellation rate- better serving our participants!
  - 2016= 25%
  - 2017 = 21%
  - 2018 =19%
  - 2019 = 16%
- Consistent resources for program managers
  - Quarterly cancelation rate reports
  - Quarterly facility usage reports
  - Facility Space Catalog
  - Guidelines for Program Development, Expansion and Elimination
  - Pursuing Partnership Guidelines & Partnership Tracker
  - Marketing resources
  - Pricing/budgeting resources
  - Program quality flowchart
- Charter team members presented “The Secret to Effective Programming Strategies” at the 2020 IPRA State Conference.







# Facility Planning for Profit & Sustainability

## **Project Sponsor**

- Dan Novak, Superintendent of Special Facilities

## **Team Members**

- Kim Prazek, Assistant to the Director of Special Facilities
- Cathy Marino, Parks Department Administrative Assistant
- Brian Morrow, Parks Department Project Planner
- Sue Wahlgren, Cosley Zoo Director
- Nicole Chesak, Assistant Director of Athletics

## **Goal Statement:**

Empower staff towards a creative district-wide program(s) to reduce expenses through joint purchasing and education of business practices.



# Facility Planning for Profit & Sustainability

## Year Four Accomplishments

- Developed and implemented an RFP process for t-shirt orders and shared best pricing with staff and departments. On average we lowered the 2018 shirt price by \$1 for an overall district savings of approximately \$8,000.
- Facilities / Programs that took advantage of the T-Shirt RFP
  - Special Events Volunteer Shirts -Taste of Wheaton | Brew Fest
  - Run Participant Shirts - (Race Wheaton, Fun Run, Cosley, Night Run, Reindeer Run)
  - Recreation/Athletic Camps
  - Parks Department Staff Shirts
  - Aquatic Uniforms



# Facility Planning for Profit & Sustainability

## Year Four Accomplishments Continued

- Developed and implemented an RFP process for our contracted vendors as it relates with timing companies for our three (3) timed runs. Fun Run | Cosley | Night Run | Reindeer Run.
  - Savings resulted in an average of \$1 per runner or approximately \$4,000.
- Reducing our reliance on property tax. Working with and as individual departments within our annual budget calendar and budget process, we attempt to reduce the reliance on property taxes. In 2018, taxes accounted for 50% of our revenue within our district wide budget.
  - 27% of revenue from Charges for Services
  - 14.5% from Product Sales
  - 2.5% from Rentals
  - 1.6% from Grants & Donations
  - 3.4% from Transfers In
  - 1% from Misc. & Interest Income.



# Facility Planning for Profit & Sustainability

## Summary of Impact on Agency Culture

Facility Planning for Profit & Sustainability quickly evolved into district-wide culture and will continue to be part of the day-to-day business approach and operations as well as within the annual budget process. We continue to strive to reduce our reliance on property taxes while examining global expenses within operational budgets. Staff has made it practice to be diligent when purchasing supplies and contracted services saving the district tens of thousands of dollars annually. Collaboration across departments have benefited the districts financially and has created a network of staff with a deeper understanding of the one-team-one goal mentality.

To round out 2019, staff from Athletics & Special Facilities presented a continuing education Cost Recovery Class for managers from all departments that examined our district-wide financial literacy, internal department communications, and department ROI goals. Class additionally covered: service categories and their beneficiaries, types and the art of pricing, cost recovery vs subsidy, and direct and indirect costs.

**PLAN of Action = ACT, Action Changes Things**



# Greening Your Park District

## **Project Sponsors**

- Angie Dosch, Animal Curator – Committee Chair
- Terra Johnson, Lincoln Marsh Program Manager – Committee Chair

## **Team Members**

- Mary Beth Cleary, Director of Athletics
- Andrew Cross, Asst. Golf Course Superintendent
- Darrell Houston, Athletic Manager
- Justin Kirtland, Golf Course Superintendent
- Valerie Lorimer, Graphic Arts Manager
- Jamie Martinson, Preschool and Camps Manager
- Sally Oppenheim, Athletic Operations Manager
- Nick Parisi, Administrative Assistant for Athletics
- Paul Stanczak, Parks and Building Superintendent
- Joe Themel, Assistant Mechanic
- Rita Trainor, Finance Director
- Matthew Wrobel, Adult Education Supervisor
- Mark Wagner, Building Engineer

## **Goal Statement:**

Explore, educate, and implement practices and improvements that reduce/improve our use of green products and services



# Greening Your Park District

## Year Four Accomplishments

- Created educational outreach components for staff and patrons to encourage greener living practices at home and work.
  - Ongoing facebook tips and eblasts sent to the community.
  - Team members hosted a Lunch and Learn opportunity about the importance of parks and our health for park district staff in cooperation with the Health and Wellness Committee.
  - Implemented the quarterly employee recognition Green Star Award.
- Further evaluated opportunities and green initiatives to explore that advance the district and community wide green initiatives.
  - Increased wildlife habitat
    - Team members planted a native garden in cooperation with the VALUES Committee.
    - Bluebird, purple martin and bat boxes were installed at Arrowhead Golf Course.
  - Recycling efforts included:
    - Adding over 50 recycling receptacles in our parks
    - 531 pounds of batteries
    - 19 tons of textiles
- Continue to seek and apply for appropriate local and national certifications that further advance greening the park district.
  - Arrowhead Golf Course achieved 6 of the 7 requirements of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program certification.



# Greening Your Park District

## Summary of Impact on Agency Culture

Over the past four years, the charter promoted a more green culture within the Wheaton Park District and community by initiating new recycling opportunities and educating the staff and public on ways to become better stewards of resources and the environment. The momentum gained within the last four years will continue to impact the agency as we continue to work to establish and maintain sound environmental policies, practices, and educational opportunities for the employees and patrons of the Wheaton Park District.



# Parks & Open Space

## **Project Sponsor**

Steve Hinchee, Superintendent of Planning

## **Team Members**

- Brian Morrow, Project Planner
- Don Cuddihee, Planning Assistant
- Nicole Chesak, Assistant Director of Athletics

## **Goal Statement:**

Evaluate ideas of the stakeholders to determine complexity, time and cost in order to prioritize and identify the Park District's:

- Current assets to be replaced
- Opportunities to enhance parks for overall satisfaction of stakeholders
- Opportunities to improve environmental sustainability





# Parks & Open Space

## **Year Four Accomplishments**

\$4,847,811 spent to advance and complete a number of Capital projects in 2019.

A few highlights include:

- Construction of a new bandshell and other park improvements are underway at Memorial Park.
- Improvements to the Central Athletic Complex lobby and restrooms were completed.
- Replacement of the track at Community Center
- New pickleball courts at Atten Park
- Construction of phase 1 of the Play For All treehouse
- Replacement playground at Hull Park and playground surfacing replacements at Briar Knoll and Triangle Parks
- Improved ADA access to Northside Pool
- Pull-up Bars for Patriots at Rathje Park

Additionally, plans for Community Center interior remodeling work has advanced.



# Parks & Open Space

## **Summary of Impact on Agency Culture**

Parks and open space form a significant portion of the district's assets and require careful planning to ensure excellent facilities for our patrons and the future of the Wheaton community. The sites, open space opportunities and changing needs of the district need to be constantly reassessed. In depth planning including input from patrons, community and staff improves our current and future sites while decreasing maintenance and costs. Since 2016 the district has invested \$14,487,911 on capital projects to improve our community.



Have a bias towards action – let's see something happen now. You can break that big plan down into small steps and take the first step right away. *Indira Gandhi*



**?**

**QUESTIONS**

**Thank you**

