

Strategic Plan 2015

River Forest Park District

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Planning Goals and Strategic Objectives express in general terms the Park District's values and mission. Both the Goals and Strategic Objectives build upon the mission statement to guide the Park District's overall master planning process.

More specifically, *GOALS* are defined as broad value statements and represent the end desire of the Park District. *OBJECTIVES* are statements which represent the means by which goals can be achieved and are addressed generally in a manner which is quantifiable.

The following goal statements represent the 2015 Strategic focus of the River Forest Park District:

1. ELEVATE AND SUSTAIN HIGH QUALITY ACTIVITY PROGRAMMING
2. STRENGTHEN OPERATIONAL AND LONG TERM FINANCIAL RESOURCES
3. INCREASE COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND PARTICIPATION
4. BROADEN AND IMPROVE THE IMAGE AND SERVICE LEVELS
5. PURSUE NEW AND STRENGTHENED INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS
6. PROACTIVELY MANAGE PROPERTY/LAND ACQUISITION
7. UTILIZE MAINTENANCE AND RENOVATION STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE
8. FOSTER GREATER LEARNING, CREATIVITY AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY

ELEVATE AND SUSTAIN HIGH QUALITY ACTIVITY PROGRAMMING

GOAL: Provide recreational and activity opportunities and facilities to meet the physical, social, environmental and cultural programming needs of River Forest Park District residents.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Ensure programs and facilities are self-supporting.
2. Where feasible, coordinate programs with other jurisdictions providing comprehensive and efficient programming and potentially co-sponsor if it makes sense.
3. Provide comparable and appropriate recreational and passive activities for all ages, and varying levels of skill, ability and interest.
4. Conduct periodic user surveys to evaluate existing programs and identify recreation trends.

STRENGTHEN OPERATIONAL AND LONG TERM FINANCIAL RESOURCES

GOAL: Ensure the financial resources support the mission statement of River Forest Park District and to be able to seize strategic opportunities as they arise.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Develop three and five-year capital budgets, and review them annually.
2. Identify, and actively seek all state, federal, and local grant opportunities where appropriate.
3. Establish program and park sponsorship criteria which meet constituent needs, and provide a sustainable source of income where applicable.
4. Actively seek to establish programs and events which are able to secure sponsorships and contributions, where applicable.
5. Establish outsourcing criteria for non-strategic operations, services and programs, where it makes sense, to control or reduce costs yet maintain or improve output/service.
6. Consider the creation of a River Forest Parks Foundation as an entity for future property/facility redevelopment or acquisition and special event support.

INCREASE COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND PARTICIPATION

GOAL: Integrate programs and facilities into the lifestyle of residents through public input and enhanced awareness of the River Forest Park District, its facilities, programs and services.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Utilize web-based and mail surveys to periodically assess community recreation trends, user preferences and levels of satisfaction with facilities, programs and services.
2. Promote the Park District through various media based public information programs to educate community leaders and the public at large about the Park Districts mission, programs and parks, and our role within the River Forest community.
3. Utilize public meetings to educate residents on the value proposition of all aspects of the Park District and to receive citizen input regarding the District's programming and facility planning.
4. Create a TEAM of staff and community volunteers for the development of a two-year outreach and community plan.

BROADEN AND IMPROVE THE IMAGE AND SERVICE LEVELS

GOAL: Establish the River Forest Park District as a leader in the community through responsive, dedicated service and excellence in management, programming, maintenance and facility redevelopment.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Refresh, update and actively utilize the web site as the main communication, promotion and image and branding tool for RFPD.
2. Respond to public questions in a timely, polite, and helpful fashion.
3. Promote the image/brand of RFPD within the River Forest community by joining, participating, sponsoring and promoting River Forest community events and service organizations
4. Develop a comprehensive Master Plan summary, which describes the priorities for the continuing development of the Park District's park and open space system – and place it on the web site.

PURSUE NEW AND STRENGTHENED INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS

GOAL: Establish and maintain cooperative relationships that work toward expanding recreational/activity opportunities and preserving all open space areas within River Forest.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Work towards the establishment of regular meetings with District 90, all other River Forest grade/high schools, Village of River Forest, Concordia and Dominican University, Triton College, Forest Preserve District of Cook County, and adjacent park districts and other pertinent jurisdictions to continually review open space and recreation facilities.
2. Where feasible, engage in joint purchasing and acquisition and redevelopment of open space/recreation facilities with other governmental units, with the ultimate goal of saving tax dollars and preserving River Forest's very limited open space.
3. Engage in joint use efforts with other jurisdictions to most effectively and efficiently meet recreation/activity needs of the River Forest Park District and its constituents.

PROACTIVELY MANAGE PROPERTY/LAND ACQUISITION

GOAL:

Identify acquisition and preservation of open space and high quality property (s) to meet existing and anticipated future recreation and activity needs of River Forest residents.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Update the Master Plan every three years to effectively communicate current policies and priorities for the RFPD Board and Staff.
2. Cooperate with other governmental, public and private entities in the acquisition/redevelopment of open space to address recreation needs and the preservation of passive areas.
3. Utilize innovative acquisition techniques, to acquire open space/conservation easements, covenants, and land trusts to secure open space.
4. Encourage acquisition of additional property/land in accordance with the Districts Master Plan.

UTILIZE MAINTENANCE AND RENOVATION STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

GOAL: Preserve and enhance the landscape and architectural heritage of River Forest Park District facilities while anticipating needs and recognizing trends and innovations.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Develop facilities, operations and maintenance improvement three and five-year plans.
2. Utilize materials and techniques for redevelopment to reinforce a unified design theme for all Park District facilities, where applicable.
3. Foster volunteer maintenance opportunities with user groups, i.e., baseball/softball and soccer groups, to ensure field and open space is maintained to the necessary levels demanded by the various user groups
4. Continue to aggressively incorporate safety standards and Americans with Disabilities Act requirements in the maintenance and redevelopment of facilities where appropriate.
5. Initiate a facility and capital equipment upgrade assessment program, which among other things, reviews user survey results, considers neighborhood and community input, and identifies needed modifications to existing facilities and equipment necessary to meet current and anticipated recreation needs.

FOSTER GREATER LEARNING, CREATIVITY AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY

GOAL: Use learning, growth, technology and innovation to deliver value both internally and externally.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Strongly encourage all Staff and Commissioners to participate in local and state Illinois Association of Park District (IAPD) conferences and seminars where appropriate.
2. Create an environment and culture that is values based and encourages and expects all Staff to continually innovate within their respective jobs and field of responsibility
3. Continually identify and assess technology which can more efficiently and effectively assist in programming, management and general public relations of RFPD.
4. Continually identify and assess the latest technological advancements which may assist in more cost efficient and effective park maintenance and redevelopment.