



elmhurst park district
strategic plan

2013-2017



developing the strategic plan 2013-2017

Since 1992, the Elmhurst Park District has been committed to a strategic planning process, and in August 2012 the Board approved its most recent five-year strategic plan that assists the District in anticipating future community desires and needs along with clarifying organizational direction for strategic decision making. Since the inception of the strategic planning process, the Board and staff have selected and implemented projects, programs, and initiatives based upon the priorities articulated in the plan.

Developing a strategic plan starts with understanding the past and assessing the present. The Board and management team reviewed the 2011 Customer Attitude and Interest Survey, 2007 Comprehensive Master Plan, 2009 Indoor Facility Study, 2011 Employee Organizational Planning Team recommendations, staff and community feedback and progress on the Strategic Plan initiatives in the current five-year strategic plan.

The mission and vision statements for the District were then reviewed and changes were made to more accurately define our purpose and vision for the future.

Elmhurst Park District Mission Statement

We provide experiences for the lifetime enjoyment of people who live and play in Elmhurst.

Elmhurst Park District Vision Statement

We aspire to be a customer-centered organization through innovation and sustainability.



After revising the mission and vision statements, the Board and staff participated in a strategic plan workshop identifying key organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and brainstormed to determine the key focus areas for the next five years. These key focus areas then provided the foundation for the development of strategic themes based on four key business perspectives: Customer, Financial, Internal Business, and Growth & Development. This approach ensures a customer focus, financial sustainability, continuous improvement to internal processes and collaboration and support of organizational learning and growth. Then the Board approved strategic objectives developed by staff, which are broad statements of the results the District wants to achieve relating to the key themes.

To ensure the Board's vision and strategy becomes a reality, staff develops strategic initiatives (specific activities, projects, and actions to be taken) along with 1-5 year assigned timelines and key performance measures, which allow for ongoing measurement of progress. These Board-driven themes and objectives in combination with staff-developed initiatives are the basis of the strategic planning document. Each year, staff reviews and develops detailed action steps, or tactics, which will ensure the completion of the strategic initiatives by driving decision making and the allocation of resources over the five-year span of the plan.



CUSTOMER PERSPECTIVE

theme: customer centered



Customers are defined as resident and business taxpayers, resident and non-resident users of services, and partners. Elements of the theme include engaging customers for long-term marketplace success through listening to the voice of the customer, building relationships, and using customer knowledge to improve services. This customer -focused structure puts customers' needs at the center of decision making.

Nurture Community Connections

The District will continue its strong history of community connections and partnership development as it relates to augmenting service delivery and delivering on Plan objectives. It will be crucial to identify the goals, costs, and benefits of existing and future partnerships.

Improve Customer Experience

An important element in operational excellence is the ability to improve the customer experience. The District will create a cross functional service team to build a systems approach to service delivery. This includes development of standards, implementing District wide customer service training, acquiring customer knowledge, and measuring customer satisfaction.

Optimize Program and Facility Mix

The District wants to ensure delivery of the right array of services and programs. The right array is determined by matching customer needs, demand, marketplace trends and District capabilities. This also includes reviewing service and facility offerings to optimize facility space.

FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVE

theme: fiscal agility

This theme suggests the District's ability to respond nimbly and quickly to ever-changing business demands, to re-prioritize agency resources to meet customer service demands, and the ability to take advantage of opportunities as they arise. This also requires the District to have just-in-time financial information and results for good decision making.

Align Resources with Community Need

The District will rely on statistically valid survey information and ongoing resident feedback in determining capital priorities. Decisions will be based on providing for the strategic greater good of the community rather than randomly selecting tactical approaches in response to special interests. This objective also emphasizes the importance of using sophisticated pricing approaches based on financial targets and market demands.

Take Care of What We Have

The Elmhurst community expects the District to adequately care for current assets before investing in new parks and facilities. As growth and unmet user needs are addressed, the District will also



Former Wilder Park playground, now re-purposed in Thailand orphanage.

ensure continued maintenance and investment in the existing infrastructure. This includes identifying the operating and maintenance costs for proposed new facilities and developing plans for replacement of existing assets.



Invest In The Future

The District aims to be flexible and nimble in order to take advantage of opportunities that arise. The goal is to situate the agency to best meet future demand and customer preferences. At the same time, there will be continued effort to identify efficiencies throughout operations, such as utility consumption.

INTERNAL BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE

theme: improvement through collaboration and innovation



The District's tenet of pursuing operational excellence will be achieved through an inclusive and participative team-based environment. In addition, rather than making decisions based on the status quo, the District will rely on best practice approaches founded on innovative techniques that result in sustainable organizational improvement.

Create a Borderless Organization

Effective communication across the organization results in efficient internal service in support of providing excellent external service. Internal seamlessness and ongoing communication is vitally important and requires identification of workplace barriers and standard operating procedures to guide staff in working effectively with others.

Excellence in Innovative Operational Management

The District will efficiently and effectively leverage labor resources in operations. Furthermore, the District will identify and continuously improve key processes and work toward adopting industry best practices.



GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

theme: continuous improvement through an empowered team

Continuous improvement is an ongoing effort to enhance products, services, and processes. These improvements will be accomplished by both Board members and staff as the District provides the tools and opportunities necessary to strengthen organizational cohesion.

Develop an Empowered Staff

Leadership competencies will include a participative leadership style and team-based approaches. In addition, leaders will encourage employee empowerment and provide guidelines and boundaries for employee decision making.



Create a Culture of Continuous Improvement

A continuous improvement environment requires all District staff and Board members to play a role in improvement efforts. It also requires knowledge of process improvements, and implementing a streamlined approach to preventing and addressing waste and inefficiencies in work methods. This culture suggests the need to question status quo thinking.

Foster a Culture of Innovation

Innovation requires a work culture that embraces change and is supported by encouraging staff to try new processes and services. Alignment exists between agency systems such as recruitment, hiring, reward and recognition, and performance feedback in support of adopting innovation. Changes in programs and services result from knowledge of industry trends and future customer requirements.

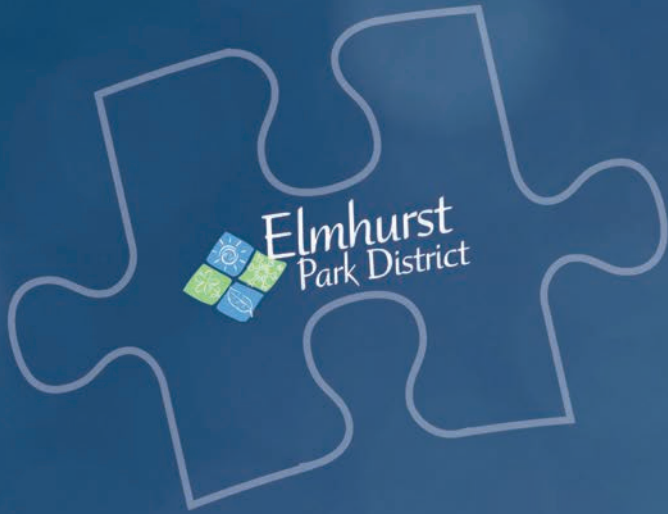


MONITORING OUR PROGRESS

As part of the Board's governance and to ensure that this Plan remains relevant and effective as a long-range planning tool that is responsive to the community's needs, the staff and Board review the Strategic Work Plan annually. Prior to budget preparation each year, staff reviews the status and timeline of the current work plan initiatives and tactics and evaluates new opportunities for possible inclusion so that adequate resources can be allocated to address the Plan's priorities.

In addition, the Board and staff members monitor and report status of Strategic Plan work plans in the Board's Strategic Plan Progress Report, mid-year and year-end, in the District's Annual Report document.

In the progress report, staff members also provide a written summary and analysis of performance measures that are being tracked to monitor achievement of the Strategic Plan priorities.



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