
E L M H U R S T P A R K D I S T R I C T
B O A R D O F P A R K C O M M I S S I O N E R S
M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: August 11, 2025

TO: Board of Park Commissioners

FROM: James W. Rogers, Executive Director
Laura Guttman, Director of Strategy & Planning
Sami Gaughan, Strategy & Planning Coordinator

RE: 2025 MID-YEAR ELEVATE ELMHURST PARKS PROGRESS REPORT

ISSUE

The 2025 Mid-Year Elevate Elmhurst Parks Progress Report provides a status report on implementation of the Elevate Elmhurst Parks (EEP) Plan (from January 1 to June 30, 2025). Staff will present a summary of the Progress Report to the Board at the August 11, 2025 board meeting. The distribution and review of this report is in accordance with Board policy.

DISCUSSION

Background and Overview

To remain dynamic and responsive to changing needs, a successful long-term plan requires an ongoing review of implementation progress to ensure action is taken and measurable results are achieved as anticipated. One tool the Board and staff use to monitor the District's Comprehensive and Strategic Plan (EEP Plan) is the Elevate Elmhurst Parks Progress Report, which is compiled and submitted to the Board bi-annually at mid-year and year-end. The EEP Progress Report assesses the achievement of EEP Plan priorities by tracking performance metric targets at year-end and the implementation progress of 2025 EEP Strategic Work Plan (SWP) Tactics at mid-year and year-end. The attached 2025 Mid-Year Progress Report highlights the work completed from January 1 to June 30 of 2025 to address the thirty-three (33) 2025 SWP Tactics.

2025 Strategic Work Plan (SWP) Update (Appendix C)

To ensure the 2025 SWP remains relevant, the Management Team reviewed the SWP in June, including Tactic implementation progress. Staff revised seventeen (17) 2025 Tactic timelines to accurately reflect when implementation started or will start and when staff can realistically complete them. Some Tactic implementation leads and staff groups involved in the implementation were also updated to accurately reflect who is responsible for or involved in the execution of the Tactic.

Staff revised the wording of two Tactics. The first Tactic, *Offer programs at Canine Corner*, was updated to *Begin offering pet-based programs*. Staff determined the focus in 2025

should be opening the park and managing operations, including maintenance and memberships before offering onsite programs and events. In the fall, the District is offering new pet-based programs with a contractor from K9 for You. The second Tactic revision was adding the Maintenance Facility to the Tactic, *Assess options for improving full-time and part-time employee workspaces at new Wagner Community Center, Horticulture operations area, and Maintenance Facility*. This wording change is due to staff evaluating and improving employee work and meeting spaces at the Maintenance Facility.

Changes to the 2025 SWP are illustrated in bold text in Appendix C.

At the August 11, 2025 Board meeting, staff will present a summary of the Report and answer Commissioners' questions. After Board approval, the Report will be available on the District's website for public review.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Park Commissioners review and approve the attached 2025 Mid-Year Elevate Elmhurst Parks Plan Progress Report.

Thank you.

Attachment: 2025 Mid-Year Elevate Elmhurst Parks Progress Report



2025

Elevate Elmhurst Parks Progress Report

Mid-Year



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Introduction

The 2025 Mid-Year Elevate Elmhurst Parks Progress Report provides a snapshot of the **District's** mid-year progress towards implementing the Elevate Elmhurst Parks (EEP) Plan as of June 30, 2025. The Mid-Year Report along with the Year-End Elevate Elmhurst Parks Progress Report assist the Park Board and staff with a continued evaluation of achievement of EEP long-term strategy for decision-making, resource allocation, and work plan development.

The main body of the report includes an implementation progress summary of 2025 EEP Strategic Work Plan Tactics utilizing dashboards created in Microsoft Power BI software, a data analysis and visualization software. The 2025 Mid-Year Report does not include performance measure outcomes and analysis for EEP Priorities. Performance measures are reported in the 2025 Year-End Elevate Elmhurst Parks Progress Report.

At the end of the report, the Appendices include an overview of the EEP Plan process and strategic framework (e.g., mission, vision, values, priorities, goals, objectives, and tactics, a list of key terms with their definitions to provide clarity to Report terminology, and the detailed 2025 EEP Strategic Work Plan (last approved by the Board on February 24, 2025).



Princess Camp



Exterior Elevations of the New Wagner Community Center



The Hub Playground Renovation

Elevate Elmhurst Parks Strategy



Our Strategic Priorities



Invigorated Parks
Enhance park amenities and open spaces



Vibrant Facilities
Expand and upgrade facilities



Dynamic Offerings
Expand program and service experiences



Engaged Community
Increase opportunities for communication and collaboration



Stronger Finances
Grow fiscal capacity

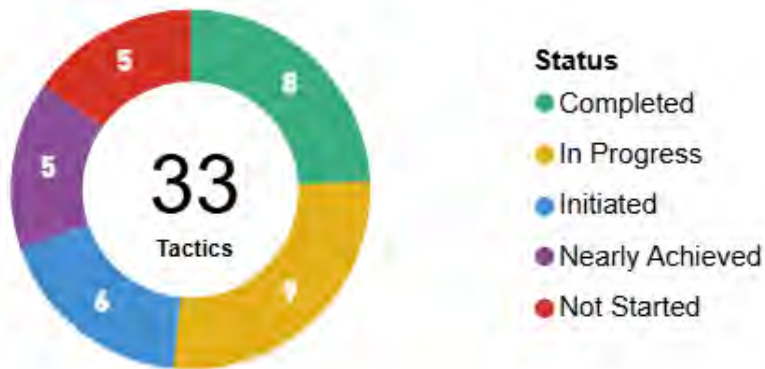


Thriving Culture
Foster a culture where every employee feels valued

Executive Summary



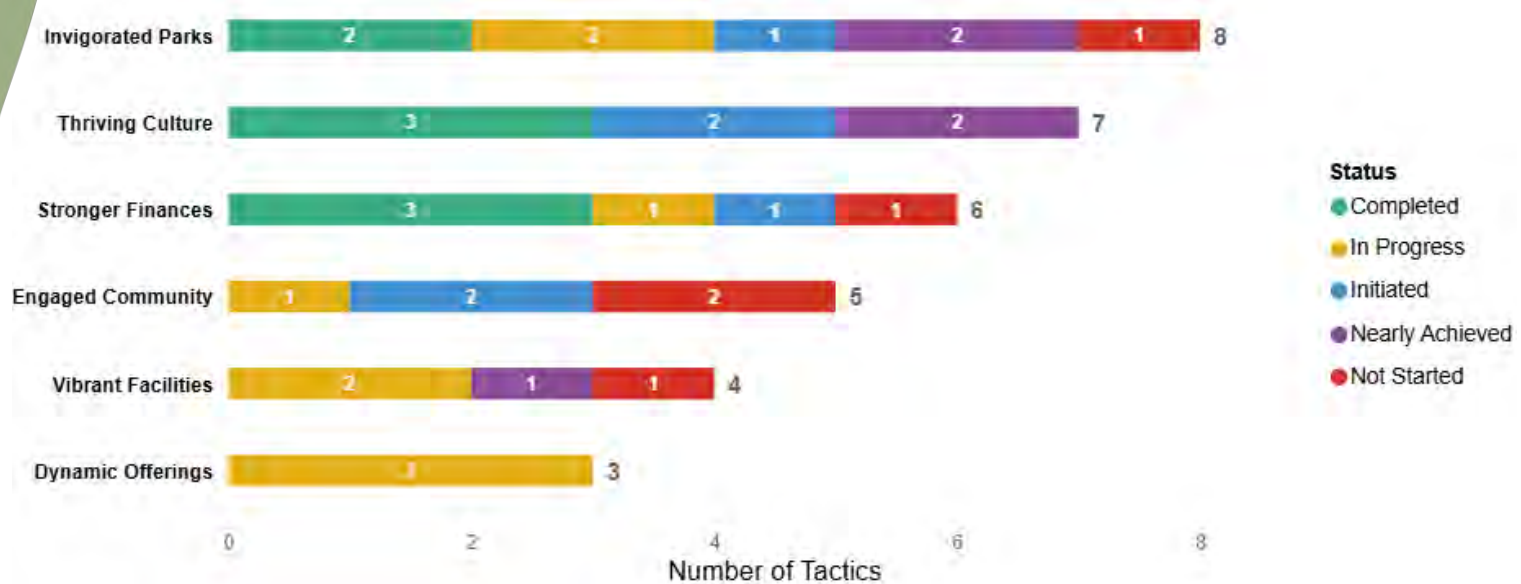
2025 Tactic Progress Summary



Throughout the report, progress status is defined as Not Started (0%), Initiated (25%), In Progress (50%), Nearly Achieved (75%), and Completed (100%). The percentages represent an approximate quantitative measure of how close the District is to completing a Tactic implementation goal.

As of June 30, 2025, 27% of Tactics were In Progress, 24% were Completed, 18% were Initiated, 15% were Nearly Achieved, and 15% were Not Started.

2025 Tactic Progress Status by Priority





Strategic Work Plan Implementation Progress



Invigorated Parks

Enhance park amenities
and open spaces

Objectives

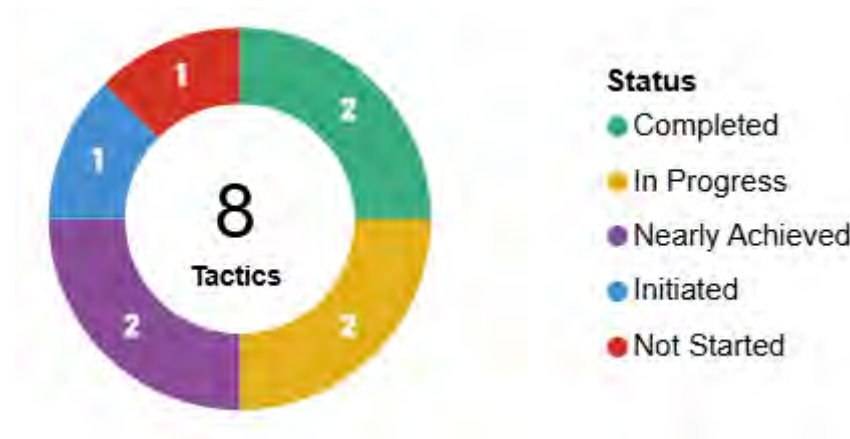
IP1 : Invest in New Park Amenities

IP2: Modernize Current Park Amenities

IP3: Expand Open Space

IP4: Support Park Operations

Tactic Progress Summary by Status



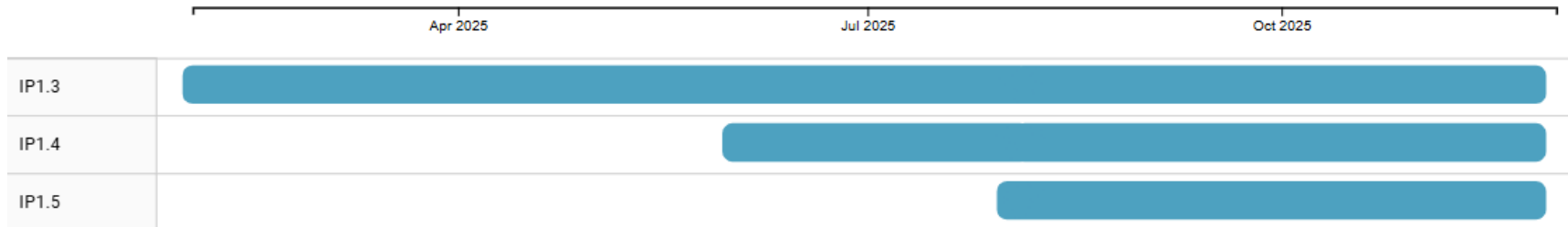
Invigorated Parks

Code ¹	Tactics	Status	Year-End Progress to Date
IP1.3	Design and construct Eldridge Park restroom building	🕒	Park Board approved contracting with Dewberry for restroom building architectural services (at the April 14, 2025 board meeting). Finalized building design and location (east side of park based on accessibility to key amenities), which was approved by the Park Board at the May 12, 2025 board meeting. Completed construction documents and project will be issued for bid in July.
IP1.4	Begin design development of Wilder Park bandshell with restrooms and south end plan	🕒	Park Board approved contracting with Dewberry for architectural services (including bandshell design) and Upland Design for landscape architectural services to develop the Wilder Park South End Master Plan (at the April 14, 2025 board meeting). Park Board reviewed the location of bandshell at the May 27, 2025 board meeting.
IP1.5	Design Prairie Path restroom building	🕒	Tactic to begin in late summer.

Key: ○ Not Started 🕒 Initiated 🕒 In Progress 🕒 Nearly Achieved ● Completed ➔ Delayed/Deferred

¹The first column indicates the tactic number referenced in the Gantt chart below.

Tactic Project Timelines



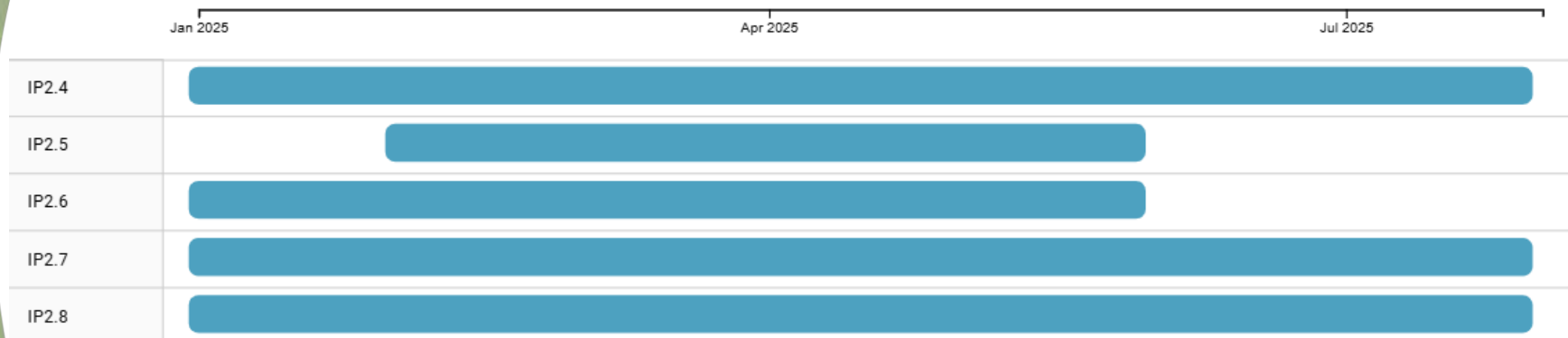
Invigorated Parks

Code ¹	Tactics	Status	Year-End Progress to Date
IP2.4	Complete master plan for Berens Park mini golf site	●	Hosted two public meetings in April to gather community feedback. The community overwhelmingly preferred to keep the space as a mini golf course. Staff worked with vendors to create new design and pricing for a potential 2026 Capital Improvement Plan project.
IP2.5	Implement Berens Park Hub playground master plan	●	Completed playground construction in May based on Park Board approved Master Plan (developed based on community feedback). Ribbon cutting was held on June 20.
IP2.6	Develop Crestview Park Master Plan, including restroom building	●	Engaged (after Park Board approval) and worked with V3 to develop Master Plan, which is based on community feedback and included potential sequencing and funding requirements for future years. Park Board approved Master Plan at June 9, 2025 Board meeting. Master Plan will be incorporated in future years of the District's Long-Range Capital Plan.
IP2.7	Develop comprehensive improvement plan for athletic fields and ball diamonds	●	Park Board approved hiring V3 to develop an Athletic Field and Ball Diamond Comprehensive Improvement Plan (at January 13, 2025 board meeting). V3 met with athletic field maintenance staff and stakeholders to discuss challenges, current conditions, and future improvements and completed site inspections. A draft plan is in development and planned improvements with cost estimates will be included in future years of the Long-Range Capital Plan.
IP2.8	Complete engineering for Berens Park tennis court replacement	●	Engaged V3 to complete engineering services for the Berens Park tennis courts replacement. As of June 30, topographic surveying, pavement coring, and plan revisions were completed. Development of the lighting plan designs for the south courts and preparation of bid document to be completed by late summer.

Key: ○ Not Started ● Initiated ● In Progress ● Nearly Achieved ● Completed ➔ Delayed/Deferred

¹The first column indicates the tactic number referenced in the Gantt chart below.

Tactic Project Timelines Continued





Vibrant Facilities

Expand and upgrade facilities

Objectives

VF1: Add New Indoor Programming Facilities/Spaces

VF2: Modernize Current Facilities/Spaces for Maintenance and Programming

VF3: Ensure Staff Workspaces Meet Evolving Needs

Tactic Progress Summary by Status



Status

- In Progress
- Nearly Achieved
- Not Started

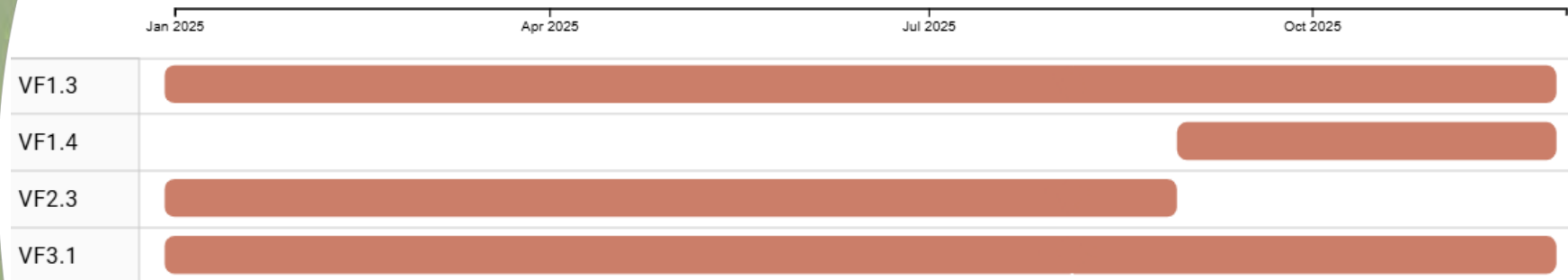
Vibrant Facilities

Code ¹	Tactics	Status	Year-End Progress to Date
VF1.3	Complete new Wagner Community Center design development and award trade contracts	●	Approved contract for construction management services with McHugh + Nacional at the March 10, 2025 board meeting. Schematic Design was approved at the April 14, 2025 board meeting and exterior elevations were approved at May 27, 2025 board meeting. Design development is 80% complete.
VF1.4	Complete existing building demolition and begin new Wagner Community Center construction	○	Tactic to begin in the fall.
VF2.3	Replace Courts Plus Café rooftop HVAC unit and install Kies Recreation Center variable air volume system	●	Installed Courts Plus HVAC unit serving the Café in March. Variable Air Volume (VAV) modules at Kies Recreation Center are scheduled for installation in August.
VF3.1	Assess options for improving full-time and part-time employee workspaces at new Wagner Community Center, Horticulture operations area, and Maintenance Facility	●	Completed assessment of Maintenance Facility workspaces in the spring. Changes included moving Park Planner office from the Administrative Office to the Maintenance Facility and swapping and upgrading the location of supervisor work stations and breakroom to create private spaces for supervisors and enhance the facility meeting and break room space. Worked with Dewberry during Wagner Community Center schematic design process to address future staff workspace needs and create effective and functional office and support spaces based on staff feedback. Plan to complete similar process for the Horticulture operations area as part of the Wilder Park South End master planning process.

Key: ○ Not Started ● Initiated ● In Progress ● Nearly Achieved ● Completed → Delayed/Deferred

¹The first column indicates the tactic number referenced in the Gantt chart below.

Tactic Project Timelines





Dynamic Offerings

Expand program and service experiences

Objectives

DO1: Integrate data-driven program/service analysis to guide program planning and execution

DO2: Offer innovative programs and services that include a diverse array of audiences

Tactic Progress Summary by Status



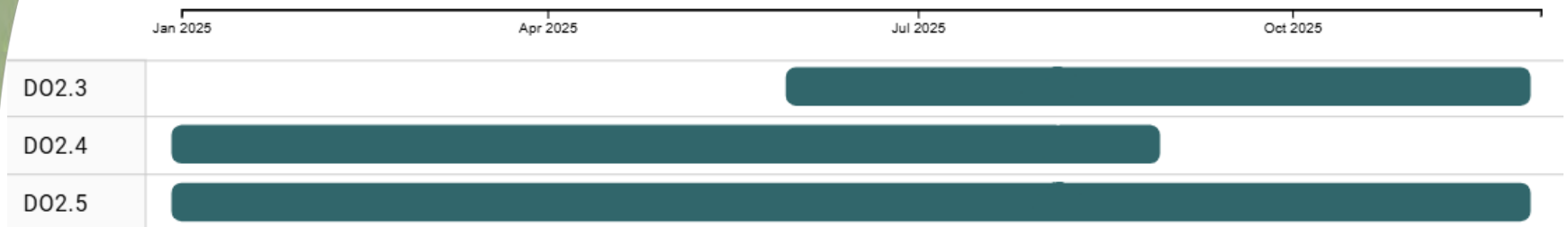
Dynamic Offerings

Code ¹	Tactics	Status	Year-End Progress to Date
D02.3	Begin offering pet-based programs at Canine Corner	🕒	Partnered with For Your K9 to offer obedience and training classes for puppies and older dogs. Additional programs and events will be offered in 2026.
D02.4	Develop plan and relocate Wagner Community Center programs, events, services, and employee workspaces	🕒	Identified relocation spaces for Wagner Community Center (WCC) programs, events, services, and employee workspaces with minimal interruptions to participants. All programs are able to be relocated to other District facilities, with the exception of Dance and Gymnastics as well as staff workspaces. Staff along with a real estate agent, McHugh + Nacional Construction, and Dewberry worked to identify, tour, and consider several locations for Dance and Gymnastics. The Board approved a three-year lease agreement at the May 27, 2025 board meeting to temporarily accommodate dance and gymnastics programs, and staff workspaces during construction of the WCC. Dewberry is assisting in developing buildout plans for the leased space, including recommendations for installing two HVAC units which were approved for purchase at the June 8, 2025 board meeting. After relocation, the District will serve the same number of program participants.
D02.5	Expand inclusivity and accessibility at community events	🕒	Held meeting between Marketing and Communications and Facilities departments to review all events and generate ideas for making events more inclusive and welcoming for all.

Key: ○ Not Started 🕒 Initiated 🕒 In Progress 🕒 Nearly Achieved ● Completed ➔ Delayed/Deferred

¹The first column indicates the tactic number referenced in the Gantt chart below.

Tactic Project Timelines





Engaged Community

Increase opportunities
for communication and
collaboration

Objectives

EC1: Expand transparency through communication and feedback initiatives

EC2: Implement strategies to foster a culture of belonging for community members

EC3: Strengthen and grow partnerships

Tactic Progress Summary by Status



Status

● Initiated

● Not Started

● In Progress

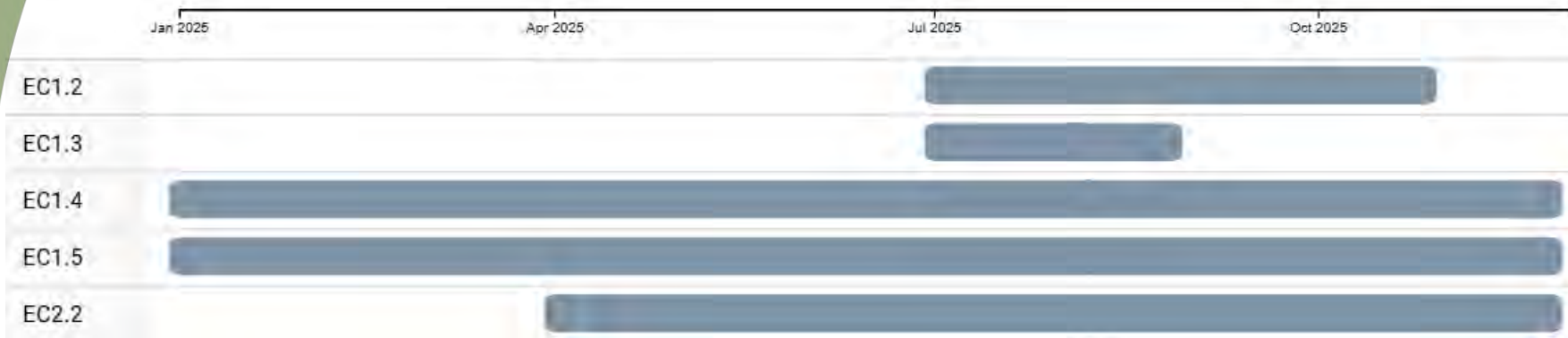
Engaged Community

Code ¹	Tactics	Status	Year-End Progress to Date
EC1.2	Complete community engagement for Wilder Park bandshell design and south end plan	○	Tactic to begin in July.
EC1.3	Gather public input for Prairie Path restroom building location	○	Tactic to begin in late summer.
EC1.4	Communicate referendum implementation progress	◐	Shared progress updates to the community and employees on District website, social media, flyers, e-newsletters, and presentations. Updates will continue to be shared as referendum projects progress.
EC1.5	Explore and implement tools for community to provide timely feedback	◐	Participated in a demo with a potential app developer. Research on user-friendly tools is ongoing.
EC2.2	Implement methods to improve accessibility of communications	◐	Developed double sided yard signs in both English and Spanish. Additional methods of improvement will be made available in the second half of the year.

Key: ○ Not Started ◐ Initiated ◑ In Progress ◒ Nearly Achieved ◓ Completed → Delayed/Deferred

¹The first column indicates the tactic number referenced in the Gantt chart below.

Tactic Project Timelines





Stronger Finances

Grow fiscal capacity

Objectives

SF1: Prepare for future fiscal impacts and opportunities

SF2: Secure alternate revenue to address community priorities

SF3: Increase financial communications regarding outlook and capacity

SF4: Implement operational improvements to increase effectiveness and maximize financial resources

Tactic Progress Summary by Status



Status

Completed

In Progress

Initiated

Not Started

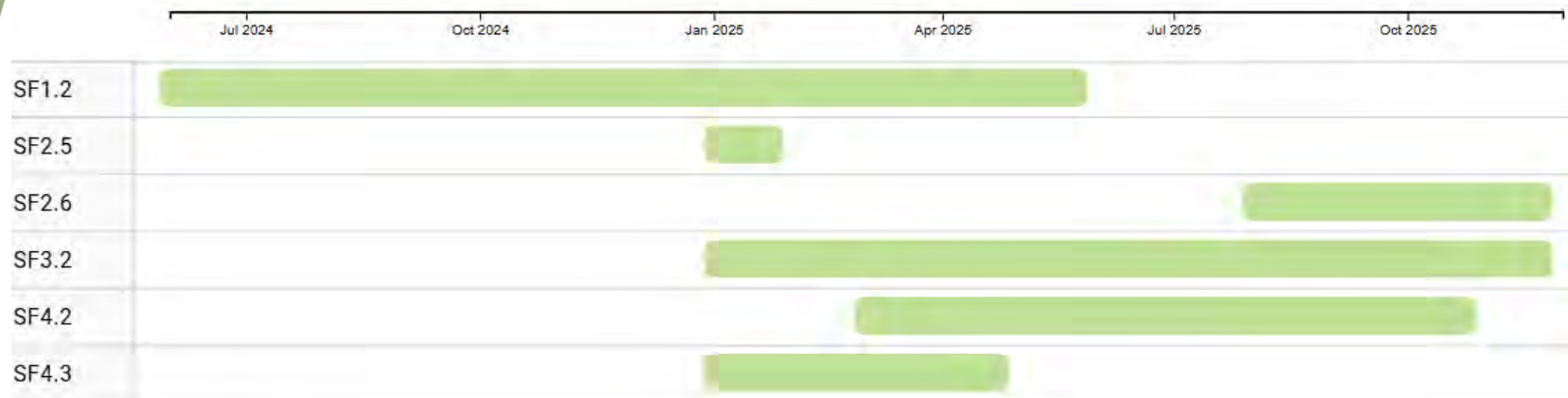
Stronger Finances

Code ¹	Tactics	Status	Year-End Progress to Date
SF1.2	Complete review and update of financial policies to facilitate growth and achievement of goals and targets	●	Park Board completed review and updated Board Policy Manual financial policies, including revisions to the investment policy due to the size of the referendum proceeds relative to the typical investment portfolio. Staff completed review and update of administrative financial policies, including revenue and expense policies.
SF2.5	Conduct sale of referendum bonds and invest proceeds	●	Completed sale of all referendum bonds in February and worked with PFM (District's investment advisor) to properly invest the funds to maximize interest revenue and maintain cash balance to fund referendum projects.
SF2.6	Evaluate long-term bonding capability to leverage debt capacity for funding capital projects	○	Tactic to begin in the fall
SF3.2	Create dashboards to communicate financial condition internally and investigate communicating dashboards externally	🕒	With the transition of the District's financial software to the cloud-based version, staff can create dashboards to track financial performance and activity. Director of Finance will work with staff one-on-one, upon request, to help set up personalized dashboards.
SF4.2	Reduce capital costs by completing infield renovation projects in-house	🕒	After Park Board approved (at April 28 board meeting) purchasing bulk mix for infield renovations, utilized in-house staff to renovate Plunkett Park Field #3. Six infields at Plunkett Park and Berens Park to be completed during the second half of the year.
SF4.3	Acquire and install trees more cost-effectively and ensure availability, quality, and necessary quantities through a tree consortium	●	Completed spring tree planting by utilizing the Suburban Tree Consortium for the acquisition and planting of fifteen new trees.

Key: ○ Not Started 🕒 Initiated 🕒 In Progress ● Nearly Achieved ● Completed ➔ Delayed/Deferred

¹The first column indicates the tactic number referenced in the Gantt chart below.

Tactic Project Timelines





Thriving Culture

Foster a culture where every employee feels valued

Objectives

TC1: Enhance employee development opportunities

TC2: Improve employee communication between departments and staff levels

TC3: Continue fostering a culture of belonging

TC4: Enhance employee benefits, compensation, and recognition to remain competitive with market and ensure equity

Tactic Progress Summary by Status



Status

● Completed

● Initiated

● Nearly Achieved

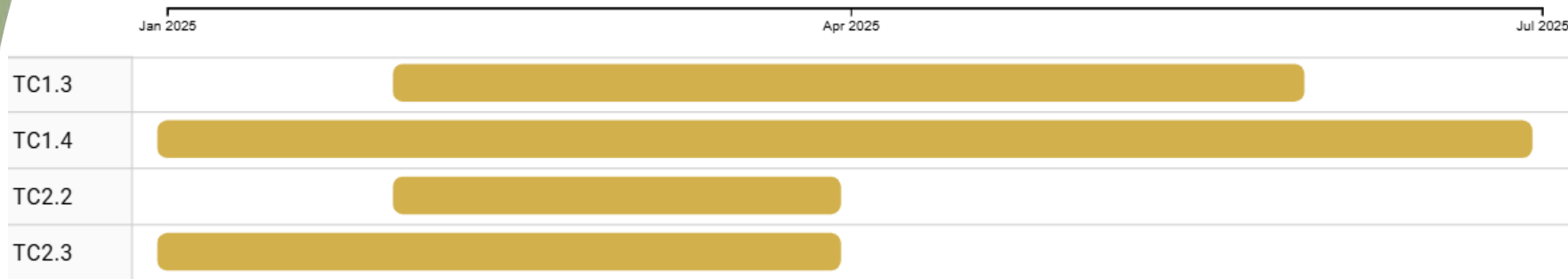
Thriving Culture

Code ¹	Tactics	Status	Year-End Progress to Date
TC1.3	Create part-time employee training plans	●	Used full-time employee training plans as a template and incorporated supervisor input to create a master Teams document for supervisors. The document can be utilized to develop career advancement plans for part-time staff.
TC1.4	Create peer program for new full-time employees	●	Launched Peer Partner Program at June All Staff Meeting, along with a Peer Partner Guide to set expectations and support relationship building. Four peer matches made, and program evaluation is in progress to inform continuous improvement.
TC2.2	Implement improvements to employee teams	●	Based on Management Team and current team member feedback, evaluated and determined current standing Employee Teams, defined team criteria which included term limits, department representation, and maximum number of teams on which an employee may service. Updated Employee Teams policy to reflect the new criteria.
TC2.3	Hold training and communications meeting for all employees	●	Held District-wide training on April 17 where over 300 employees learned more about topics such as Confrontation, Conflict Management & De-escalation by RJM Strategy Group, Building a Magical Culture by Next Practice Partner, and updates to Referendum projects and the Values Recognition Program.

Key: ○ Not Started ● Initiated ● In Progress ● Nearly Achieved ● Completed ➔ Delayed/Deferred

¹The first column indicates the tactic number referenced in the Gantt chart below.

Tactic Project Timelines



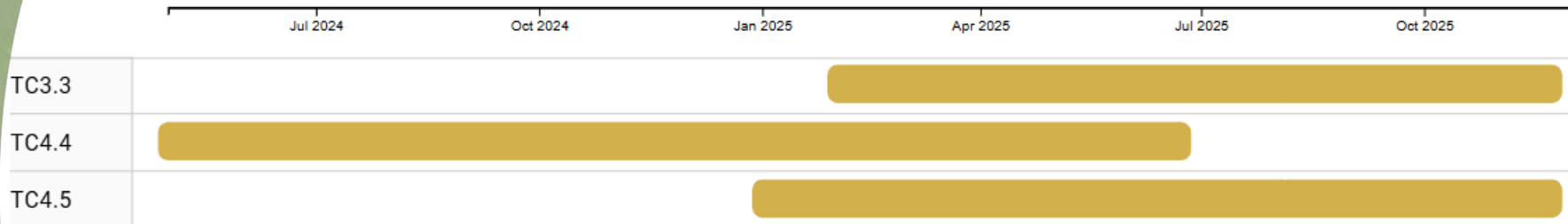
Thriving Culture

Code ¹	Tactics	Status	Year-End Progress to Date
TC3.3	Assess and update Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Action Plan		Based on feedback from DEIB Team members, began developing an employee survey to assess Districts DEIB goals and action plans (survey will be administered in August).
TC4.4	Continue enhancing Values Recognition Program		Formed Employee Task Force, which assessed and reviewed employee feedback on the Values Recognition Program (VRP), recommended improvements, and revised District Values behaviors that define how to live the Values. Changes implemented include increasing recognition of all Values Champions through communications and quarterly posters and increasing the number of employees receiving the VRP Award. Additional improvements and Values training will be launched in 2026.
TC4.5	Implement new recognition initiatives for employees at all levels		Launched new recognition initiatives which include service awards for part-time staff and welcome goody bags for new employees.

Key:  Not Started  Initiated  In Progress  Nearly Achieved  Completed  Delayed/Deferred

¹The first column indicates the tactic number referenced in the Gantt chart below.

Tactic Project Timelines Continued



Appendices



Appendix A:

Elevate Elmhurst Parks Overview

Appendix A: Elevate Elmhurst Parks Overview

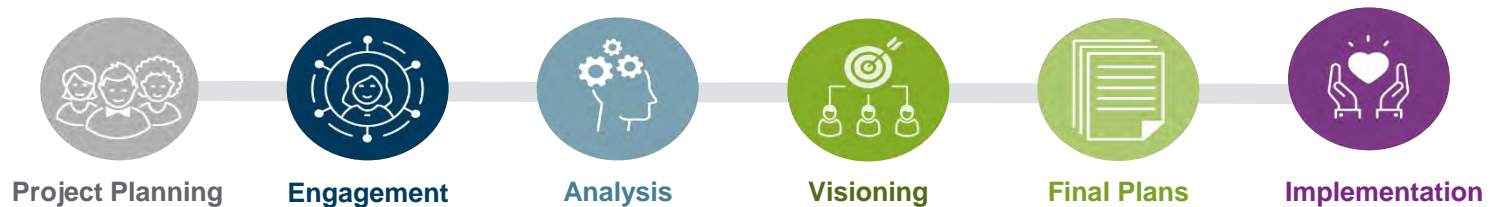
Elevate Elmhurst Parks – Mapping our Future

Mission and vision statements are necessary to provide organizational direction. However, once these statements are written, an organization must create a long-term plan to accomplish them and achieve future goals. In 2024, the Board of Park Commissioners and staff updated the **District's** Comprehensive and Strategic Plan using a process that included:

- Gathering and reviewing community and employee feedback;
- Conducting demographic, park, facility, program, organizational, and financial assessments;
- **Creating the community's future vision of park and recreation services; and**
- Developing an action plan to implement the future vision.

By basing plans on community feedback and defining future priorities, the Park Board clarifies organizational direction for focused decision making and financial and work planning to meet current and future community needs. Since the inception of the **District's** first comprehensive plan and strategic plan, the Board and staff have implemented projects, programs, and initiatives based upon the priorities articulated during the planning process.

Elevate Elmhurst Parks Process Six Phases April 2023-February 2024



Appendix A: Elevate Elmhurst Parks Overview

Elevate Elmhurst Parks Plan

On February 26, 2024, the Board approved the Elevate Elmhurst Parks Plan, which included the Plan document and Appendices. Together, these documents provide a summary of the Elevate Elmhurst Parks Plan key findings and recommendations, long-term strategy (mission, vision, values, priorities, goal statements, and objectives), engagement feedback collected, and other needs assessment data that will drive long-range planning for the next five-years. The Plan incorporates broad priorities, goals, and objectives for comprehensive planning (e.g., physical asset and program improvements) and strategic planning (e.g., internal operations and culture, engagement and communications, and financial improvements). The six priorities of the Elevate Elmhurst Parks Plan are Invigorated Parks, Vibrant Facilities, Dynamic Offerings, Engaged Community, Stronger Finances, and Thriving Culture.

To review the Plan document and learn more about Elevate Elmhurst Parks, click [here](#).



Our Strategic Priorities

**Invigorated Parks**
Enhance park amenities and open spaces

**Vibrant Facilities**
Expand and upgrade facilities

**Dynamic Offerings**
Expand program and service experiences

**Engaged Community**
Increase opportunities for communication and collaboration

**Stronger Finances**
Grow fiscal capacity

**Thriving Culture**
Foster a culture where every employee feels valued

Appendix A: Elevate Elmhurst Parks Overview

Elevate Elmhurst Parks Strategic Work Plan

Based on Elevate Elmhurst Parks Priorities, Goal Statements, and Objectives, the Board and staff developed the Elevate Elmhurst Parks Strategic Work Plan to guide and track execution of the Elevate Elmhurst Parks Plan. Performance metrics, tied to the strategic Priorities, are also tracked to assess progress on achieving Plan strategy. As part of the **Board's** governance and to ensure the Plan remains relevant and effective, the Board and staff review the Strategic Work Plan annually, so it evolves based on ongoing shifts, opportunities, and challenges in the **District's** operating, economic, and political environments.



Appendix B:

Key Terms and Definitions

Appendix C: Key Terms and Definitions Continued

The following are definitions for key terms used in the Elevate Elmhurst Park Progress Report.

Comprehensive Plan—long-range planning tool updated every five to ten years and developed through a community planning process. It provides direction regarding development and acquisition of an **agency's** current and potential physical assets.

Goals and Objectives—Describe plans a department or agency has for upcoming and future years to implement Strategic and Comprehensive Plan priorities. Goals identify intended end results but are often ongoing and may not be achieved in one year.

Mission—the core purpose of the organization and why it exists.

Performance Metric—a metric used to evaluate and communicate performance against expected results. Metrics are quantitative indicators and capture percentages, numbers, etc. Metrics assist the staff with determining organizational performance.

Performance Target—what the District is trying to achieve in a quantitative measure of performance to assess accomplishment of the EEP Plan Priorities.

Pulse Survey—a short, frequent questionnaire used to gather real-time feedback and insights from employees, customers, or other stakeholders, allowing organizations to quickly assess and address issues or gauge sentiment.

Priorities—provide broad macro-oriented organizational direction for addressing the future vision of the organization.

Planning Areas—For park and facility planning, District is divided into 15 planning areas that are distinguished by barriers such as roads, railroads, stream corridors and other features that obstruct walkability.

Strategic Plan—a long-range planning tool updated every three years and developed through a community planning process. It provides direction regarding the **agency's** main focus and activities.

Strategic Work Plan—the action plan for implementing strategy with timelines and the positions/departments responsible for implementation.

Tactics—the specific programs, activities, projects, or actions an organization will undertake to meet strategic priorities, goals, and objectives.

Values—meaningful expressions of describing what is important in the way employees and customers are treated and relates to the internal culture of the organization.

Variance—the difference between the expected result and actual result.

Vision—the desired future of the organization. The vision should be a “**stretch**” for the organization, but possible to achieve in approximately five years. It should state a measurable achievement.

Appendix C: Key Terms and Definitions

The following are the definitions for key terms used for Tactic Progress Status and Performance Metrics.

Tactic Progress Status Percentage Definitions: Not Started (0%), Initiated (25%), In Progress (50%), Nearly Achieved (75%), and Completed (100%). The percentages represent an approximate quantitative measure of how close the District is towards addressing a Tactic implementation goal.

Facility Square Footage Categories in the Vibrant Facilities Priority Section

- **Administrative**: Administrative spaces contain offices and areas for staff that manage the operations of the facility or Park District overall. This would include spaces like: Reception / Control Desks, Offices, Conference Rooms, Break Areas, and File Storage.
- **Recreation**: Recreation spaces include primarily programmed spaces with active recreation opportunities but also support passive recreation and community functions along with the spaces that support these functions. This includes spaces like: Gymnasiums, Fitness Spaces, Group Fitness / Dance Studios, Tennis Courts, Indoor Turf, Multi-purpose Rooms, and Classrooms.
- **Support**: Support spaces are primarily shared functions that serve the building or population in the facility. This would include spaces like: Mechanical & Electrical Rooms, Storage, Janitorial, and Public Restrooms.

Park Classifications Referred to in the Invigorated Parks Priority Section

- **Mini Park**: These parks serve a concentrated or limited population area for a specific function or age group. Examples of amenities found in mini parks include playground/tot lot equipment, benches, picnic tables, gazebos, ornamental landscape features, etc. Mini Parks may have amenities that draw people from a greater area but typically serve an area within a ¼ mile radius. Because of the specialized nature of these parks, they usually range in size from 2,500 square feet up to 1 acre.
- **Neighborhood Park**: These parks serve the recreational and social focus of neighborhoods and typically include informal active and passive recreation options, including athletic fields and courts, picnic areas, and playgrounds. Many neighborhood parks may also contain athletic fields that are used by community athletic organizations. It serves an area within a ¼ to ½ mile radius uninterrupted by major roads or other barriers and 5 to 10 acres is considered optimal.
- **Community Park**: These parks are diverse in nature, serving a broader purpose than neighborhood or mini parks. While community parks may include neighborhood park amenities, and do act as neighborhood parks as well, the focus of a community park is on meeting community-based recreation, athletics, and open space needs (e.g., larger athletic complexes, aquatic amenities, walking paths, picnic areas, bandshell, etc.). It serves an area within a ½ mile to over a 3-mile radius and 25 acres or more is preferred.

Appendix C:

2025 Strategic Work Plan

Elevate Elmhurst Parks Strategic Work Plan

Mission, Vision, Values, and Priorities	Priorities	Goal Statements	Code	Objectives	Performance Metric(s) to Track Achievement of Strategy
<p>Our Mission We enrich lives while having fun!</p> <p>Our Vision To be a national leader in providing memorable parks and recreation experiences to our community.</p> <p>Our Values Customer Service Excellence, Belonging, Fun, Community Focused, Integrity</p> <p>Our Strategic Priorities Invigorated Parks: Enhance park amenities and open spaces Vibrant Facilities: Expand and upgrade facilities Dynamic Offerings: Expand program and service experiences Engaged Community: Increase opportunities for communication and collaboration Stronger Finances: Grow fiscal capacity Thriving Culture: Foster a culture where every employee feels valued</p>	Invigorated Parks	Enhance park amenities and open spaces	IP1	Invest in new park amenities	◦ Total Quantity of New Park Amenities ◦ Total Park Amenities Modernized ◦ Total New Acreage Addressing Planning Area Deficiencies ◦ Total Natural Area Acreage ◦ % of Equipment & Vehicles Within Useful Life
	Invigorated Parks	Enhance park amenities and open spaces	IP2	Modernize current park amenities	
	Invigorated Parks	Enhance park amenities and open spaces	IP3	Expand open space	
	Invigorated Parks	Enhance park amenities and open spaces	IP4	Support park operations	
	Vibrant Facilities	Expand and upgrade facilities	VF1	Add new indoor programming facilities/spaces	◦ Total Square Footage by Facility Space Type ◦ Facilities Average Age - <i>Future</i> ◦ % of Office Space Square Footage Modernized - <i>Future</i>
	Vibrant Facilities	Expand and upgrade facilities	VF2	Modernize current facilities/spaces for maintenance and programming	
	Vibrant Facilities	Expand and upgrade facilities	VF3	Ensure staff workspaces meet evolving needs	
	Dynamic Offerings	Expand program and service experiences	DO1	Integrate data-driven program/service analysis to guide program planning and execution	◦ Program Success Rate by Core Program Area ◦ Total Unique Registrants ◦ % of Program & Pass Registrants by Age Group ◦ Program Life Cycle Distribution ◦ % of Adult & Youth Population Represented in Program Menu ◦ % of Unique Resident Households that Completed a Transaction ◦ % of Program Sessions with a Waitlist
	Dynamic Offerings	Expand program and service experiences	DO2	Offer innovative programs and services that include a diverse array of audiences	
	Engaged Community	Increase opportunities for communication and collaboration	EC1	Expand transparency through communication and feedback initiatives	◦ Belonging Rating - <i>Future</i> ◦ Partner Satisfaction Rate - <i>Future</i>
	Engaged Community	Increase opportunities for communication and collaboration	EC2	Implement strategies to foster a culture of belonging for community members	
	Engaged Community	Increase opportunities for communication and collaboration	EC3	Strengthen and grow partnerships	
	Stronger Finances	Grow Fiscal Capacity	SF1	Prepare for future fiscal impacts and opportunities	◦ Percent of Non-Tax Revenue ◦ Met Fund Reserve Targets - Tier 1 ◦ Met Fund Reserve Targets - Tier 2 ◦ Program Revenue Per Unique Registrant ◦ Debt Service Ratio ◦ Cost Recovery Goals - <i>Future</i>
	Stronger Finances	Grow Fiscal Capacity	SF2	Secure alternate revenue to address community priorities	
	Stronger Finances	Grow Fiscal Capacity	SF3	Increase financial communications regarding outlook and capacity	
	Stronger Finances	Grow Fiscal Capacity	SF4	Implement operational improvements to increase effectiveness and maximize financial resources	
	Thriving Culture	Foster a culture where every employee feels valued	TC1	Enhance employee development opportunities	◦ Employee Net Promoter Score ◦ Employee Wellbeing Indicator for Belonging ◦ Employee Wellbeing Indicator for Recognition/Praise
	Thriving Culture	Foster a culture where every employee feels valued	TC2	Improve employee communication between departments and staff levels	
	Thriving Culture	Foster a culture where every employee feels valued	TC3	Continue fostering a culture of belonging	
	Thriving Culture	Foster a culture where every employee feels valued	TC4	Enhance employee benefits, compensation, and recognition to remain competitive with market and ensure equity	

Priority	Objectives	Tactics	Anticipated Start	Anticipated Completion	Cost Level of Magnitude	Progress	Status	Lead Role	Staff Groups	Implementation Goal
Invigorated Parks	IP1	Design and construct Eldridge Park restroom building	February-25	December-25	\$\$\$	0.50	In Progress	Director of Referendum Project Construction	Facilities and Parks	Working with Dewberry, complete site location assessment, design development, permitting, bid process, and construction based on Park Board approval of year-round restroom building at Eldridge Park
Invigorated Parks	IP1	Begin design development of Wilder Park bandshell with restrooms and south end plan	June-25	December-25	\$	0.25	Initiated	Director of Referendum Project Construction	Wilder Park Southside End Planning Task Force	Based on community input, begin to develop options for the Wilder Park bandshell with year-round restrooms design and south end plan
Invigorated Parks	IP1	Design Prairie Path restroom building	August-25	December-25	\$\$\$	0.00	Not Started	Director of Referendum Project Construction	Facilities and Parks	Based on potential location site assessments and community input, determine location of Prairie Path year-round restroom building and complete design development, permitting, and bid process
Invigorated Parks	IP2	Complete master plan for Berens Park mini golf site	January-25	August-25	\$\$	0.50	In Progress	Division Manager-Facilities	Facilities, Parks, Marketing and Communications	Hire an engineer to comprehensively evaluate the site and provide alternatives for future development along with collect community input including public meetings and an online survey to shape the master plan and help provide future direction for developing the site.
Invigorated Parks	IP2	Implement Berens Park Hub playground master plan	February-25	June-25	\$\$\$\$	1.00	Completed	Director of Facilities & Assistant Director/Director of Parks	Facilities, Parks	Complete construction based on Board approved 2024 master plan, including playground (for children 2-5 years old and 5-12 years old) and bench seating and hold groundbreaking and grand opening event.
Invigorated Parks	IP2	Develop Crestview Park Master Plan, including restroom building	January-25	June-25	\$\$	1.00	Completed	Director of Facilities	Administration, Recreation, Parks, Marketing and Communications	To develop master plan prior to proposed replacement of the playground in 2026 and construction of year-round restroom building, hire V3 to assist with plan development, conduct public meetings to garner community input, and present draft master plan to the Park Board for review and approval
Invigorated Parks	IP2	Develop comprehensive improvement plan for athletic fields and ball diamonds	January-25	August-25	\$\$	0.75	Nearly Achieved	Assistant Director/ Director of Parks	Parks, Facilities	To help guide future capital planning and meet community needs and expectations, engage consulting firm to complete a comprehensive review of all outdoor athletic fields and ball diamonds, including soil testing, inventory of amenities, drainage, recommended field enhancements, etc.
Invigorated Parks	IP2	Complete engineering for Berens Park tennis court replacement	January-25	August-25	\$\$	0.75	Nearly Achieved	Assistant Director/Director of Parks Landscape Architect & Director of Facilities	Assistant Director/ Director of Parks & Special Use Facilities, Parks	Engage V3 for engineering services to provide drawings, permitting assistance, and project manual documents to bid project for 2026 construction

Priority	Objectives	Tactics	Anticipated Start	Anticipated Completion	Cost Level of Magnitude	Progress	Status	Lead Role	Staff Groups	Implementation Goal
Vibrant Facilities	VF1	Complete new Wagner Community Center design development and award trade contracts	January-25	December-25	\$\$	0.50	In Progress	Director of Referendum Project Construction	Wagner Community Center Design Development Task Force	Based on feedback from the Wagner Community Center Design Development Task Force and working with Dewberry, undergo the facility design development process including Park Board approval, select (through a request for qualifications process) a Construction Management firm, complete permitting, and let bids for trade contracts
Vibrant Facilities	VF1	Complete existing building demolition and begin new Wagner Community Center construction	September-25	December-25	\$\$\$\$	0.00	Not Started	Director of Referendum Project Construction	Wagner Community Center Design Development Task Force	Complete abatement and demolition of current Wagner Community Center and begin construction of new Wagner Community Center
Vibrant Facilities	VF2	Replace Courts Plus Café rooftop HVAC unit and install Kies Recreation Center variable air volume system	January-25	September-25	\$\$	0.75	Nearly Achieved	Director of Facilities	Facilities	Replace Courts Plus HVAC unit serving cafe to avoid high maintenance and repair costs and down time and add Variable Air Volume (VAV) modules to the Kies Recreation Center 30-ton rooftop unit to control the damper to regulate the heating and cooling to satisfy zone requirements.
Vibrant Facilities	VF3	Assess options for improving full-time and part-time employee workspaces at new Wagner Community Center, Horticulture operations area, and Maintenance Facility	January-25	December-25	#	0.50	In Progress	Director of Referendum Project Construction	Wagner Community Center Design Development and Wilder Park Southside Planning Task Forces	Based on Referendum Implementation Task Forces feedback, evaluate future office space needs and new workspaces (layout, functionality, space utilization, accessibility, etc.), and assess alternatives to improve employee workspaces at the new Wagner Community Center and for Horticulture operations at Wilder Park
Dynamic Offerings	DO2	Begin offering pet-based programs at Canine Corner	June-25	December-25	\$	0.50	In Progress	Director of Recreation	Recreation	Partner with local dog care service providers to develop a program menu for Canine Corner that will include year-round programs and events.
Dynamic Offerings	DO2	Develop plan and relocate Wagner Community Center programs, events, services, and employee workspaces	January-25	September-25	\$\$\$	0.50	In Progress	Director of Recreation & Director of Facilities	Wagner Community Center Relocation Task Force, Facilities	Create and execute a comprehensive plan to move all programs, services, and workspaces that are currently located at the Wagner Community Center to sufficient spaces in order to accommodate programs and participants currently served by the District
Dynamic Offerings	DO2	Expand inclusivity and accessibility at community events	January-25	December-25	\$	0.50	In Progress	Director of Marketing and Communications	Marketing and Communications, Facilities, Parks	Review all community events to identify opportunities to expand inclusivity and accessibility, including event locations, activities, and communication methods to accommodate individuals of all abilities, ages, and backgrounds in an effort to create a more welcoming and accessible experience for all community members.

Priority	Objectives	Tactics	Anticipated Start	Anticipated Completion	Cost Level of Magnitude	Progress	Status	Lead Role	Staff Groups	Implementation Goal
Engaged Community	EC1	Complete community engagement for Wilder Park bandshell design and south end plan	July-25	November-25	\$	0.00	Not Started	Executive Director, Director of Marketing and Communications & Director of Referendum Project Construction	Community Engagement and Communications Task Force	Facilitate an inclusive community engagement process to gather input on the Wilder Park bandshell design and south end plan to ensure they reflect community needs, enhance park amenities, and align with the District's vision for public spaces
Engaged Community	EC1	Gather public input for Prairie Path restroom building location	July-25	September-25	#	0.00	Not Started	Director of Marketing and Communications & Director of Referendum Project Construction	Community Engagement and Communications Task Force	Gather public input on the location of the Prairie Path restroom building through multiple feedback channels (e.g., open houses, surveys, etc.)
Engaged Community	EC1	Communicate referendum implementation progress	January-25	December-25	#	0.50	In Progress	Director of Marketing and Communications	Community Engagement and Communications Task Force	Communicate timely and engaging updates on referendum project progress to internal staff and the community through various channels
Engaged Community	EC1	Explore and implement tools for community to provide timely feedback	January-25	December-25	\$	0.25	Initiated	Director of Marketing and Communications & Director of Strategy and Planning	Marketing and Communications, Strategy and Planning, Information Technology	Research and implement user-friendly tools that enable the community to provide timely feedback on programs, events, parks, and facilities to streamline the feedback process, increase engagement, and gather actionable insights to improve services and address community needs in real time.
Engaged Community	EC2	Implement methods to improve accessibility of communications	April-25	December-25	\$	0.25	Initiated	Director of Marketing and Communications	Marketing and Communications, Information Technology	Identify and implement methods to improve the accessibility of District communications to enhance inclusivity (e.g., materials in alternate formats, large print, website accessibility features, etc.).
Stronger Finances	SF1	Complete review and update of financial policies to facilitate growth and achievement of goals and targets	June-24	June-25	#	1.00	Completed	Director of Finance & Director of Strategy and Planning	Park Board, Management Team	Comprehensively review and update District financial policies (including but not limited to reserve and fund balance policies, investment policies, revenue policies, expense policies, etc.) to effectively prepare for future fiscal impacts and opportunities.
Stronger Finances	SF2	Conduct sale of referendum bonds and invest proceeds	January-25	February-25	#	1.00	Completed	Director of Finance	Financials Task Force	Work with Mesirow to coordinate bond rating review and complete bond sale and coordinate with PFM to properly invest referendum funds to maximize interest revenue while maintaining enough cash balance to fund referendum projects
Stronger Finances	SF2	Evaluate long-term bonding capability to leverage debt capacity for funding capital projects	August-25	December-25	#	0.00	Not Started	Director of Finance	Administration, Finance, Strategy and Planning	Work with bond advisor to determine how best to leverage long-term bonding capacity to fund both annual asset management needs and large-scale projects beginning in 2026 after the 2014A G.O. Limited Tax Park Refunding Bond is paid off (approximately \$500,000 per year).
Stronger Finances	SF3	Create dashboards to communicate financial condition internally and investigate communicating dashboards externally	January-25	December-25	#	0.25	Initiated	Director of Finance & Director of Information Technology	Finance, Information Technology	Utilize the District's financial software to develop data driven dashboards that provide transparent communication of real-time insights into the District finances for staff decision-making and potentially for community awareness.
Stronger Finances	SF4	Reduce capital costs by completing infield renovation projects in-house	March-25	November-25	\$\$	0.50	In Progress	Assistant Director/Director of Parks	Parks	Renovate seven infields in-house with material costs budgeted at \$49,500 as compared to contractual infield renovations, which previously cost approximately \$25,000 per field (saving the District approximately \$125,500 for other capital improvements in 2025).
Stronger Finances	SF4	Acquire and install trees more cost-effectively and ensure availability, quality, and necessary quantities through a tree consortium	January-25	May-25	\$\$	1.00	Completed	Landscape Architect	Facilities, Parks	Shift purchasing and installation of tree plantings to the consortium selected lowest most responsible bidder.

Priority	Objectives	Tactics	Anticipated Start	Anticipated Completion	Cost Level of Magnitude	Progress	Status	Lead Role	Staff Groups	Implementation Goal
Thriving Culture	TC1	Create part-time employee training plans	February-25	June-25	#	1.00	Completed	Director of Human Resources and Risk	Human Resources, Management Team	Develop part-time employee training plans to increase professional development and career advancement.
Thriving Culture	TC1	Create peer program for new full-time employees	January-25	July-25	\$	0.75	Nearly Achieved	Human Resources & Risk Supervisor	Human Resources	Develop a peer program where new full-time employees are paired with an experienced colleague to help them learn their role and the District culture and build relationships.
Thriving Culture	TC2	Implement improvements to employee teams	February-25	April-25	#	1.00	Completed	Director of Human Resources and Risk & Director of Strategy and Planning	Strategy and Planning, Human Resources, Management Team	To enhance collaboration and effectiveness, assess the purpose, composition, and structure of employee teams and implement improvements.
Thriving Culture	TC2	Hold training and communications meeting for all employees	January-25	April-25	\$	1.00	Completed	Director of Human Resources and Risk & Director of Strategy and Planning	Strategy and Planning, Human Resources, Administration	To foster belonging and improve communication between departments and staff levels, hold a full-time and part-time employee meeting to provide District updates and specific trainings that meet Distinguished Agency reaccreditation requirements.
Thriving Culture	TC3	Assess and update Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Action Plan	February-25	December-25	\$	0.25	Initiated	Director of Human Resources and Risk, Director of Strategy and Planning, & Human Resources & Risk Supervisor	Strategy and Planning, Human Resources, Management Team, DEIB Sub-groups	Collect employee feedback and form a staff working group (consisting of DEIB sub-group members) to assess and update the 2023-25 DEIB goals and action plan to continue fostering an equitable and inclusive culture where all employees feel they are valued and belong.
Thriving Culture	TC4	Continue enhancing Values Recognition Program	May-24	July-25	\$	0.75	Nearly Achieved	Director of Strategy & Planning	Strategy & Planning, Human Resources, Staff Task Force	Based on employee feedback, assess, improve, and enhance the Values Recognition Program, including branding, program guidelines, incentives for participation, recognition of Values Champions and Award Winners, etc.
Thriving Culture	TC4	Implement new recognition initiatives for employees at all levels	January-25	December-25	\$	0.25	Initiated	Director of Human Resources and Risk	Human Resources, Management Team	Investigate and implement new employee recognition initiatives (e.g., part-time employee service awards) to increase employee morale, belonging, and productivity and to strengthen District culture.

Cost Symbol Key	Status Key
\$ \$1-\$25,000	Not Started
\$\$ \$25,001-\$100,000	Initiated
\$\$\$ \$100,001-\$500,000	In Progress
\$\$\$\$ \$500,001-\$1,000,000	Nearly Achieved
\$\$\$\$\$ >\$1,000,000	Completed
# Indirect Cost Expenses Only	Delayed/Deferred