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 10, 2026

TO: Board of Park Commissioners

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

RE: **2026 MID-YEAR ELEVATE ELMHURST PARKS PROGRESS REPORT**

ISSUE

The 2026 Mid-Year Elevate Elmhurst Parks Progress Report provides an implementation status report of the Elevate Elmhurst Parks (EEP) Plan (from January 1 to June 30, 2026). Staff will present a summary of the Progress Report to the Board at the August 10, 2026 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 (EEP) Progress Report, which is compiled and submitted to the Board bi-annually at mid-year and year-end.

The EEP Progress Report evaluates achievement of EEP Plan long-term strategy by tracking the implementation progress of 2026 EEP Strategic Work Plan (SWP) Tactics at mid-year and year-end and performance metric outcomes as compared to targets at year-end. The attached 2026 Mid-Year Progress Report highlights work completed from January 1 to June 30 to address the thirty-one (31) 2026 SWP Tactics.

2026 Strategic Work Plan (SWP) Update (Appendix C)

To ensure the 2026 SWP remains relevant for work planning along with progress reporting, the Management Team reviewed the SWP in June, including Tactic implementation progress. Staff revised twenty-one (21) 2026 Tactic timelines to accurately reflect when implementation began or will begin and when staff can realistically complete the Tactics. Two (2) tactics were deferred to future years due to timelines changing for related initiatives.

New 2026 SWP Tactics: Based on Board approval of the Wilder Park South Master Plan on February 9, 2026 and related planning and construction funding on March 9, 2026, staff added the following new Tactics to the SWP for the Invigorated Parks Priority:

- Complete design development for Wilder Park South Master Plan implementation and issue for bid
- Complete design development and construction documents for Wilder Park Recreation Building redevelopment.

These Tactics reflect the work planned to be completed in 2026 to accomplish these projects.

2026 SWP Tactic Revisions: Staff revised the wording of the following Tactics to accurately reflect the work being completed.

- Added “design development” to the Tactic, *Complete Prairie Path restroom building design development and construction* since this is a major component of the project.
- Deleted references to restrooms as part of the *Complete design development and begin construction of Wilder Park bandshell* Tactic since restrooms will not be part of the bandshell structure.
- Deleted “begin converting” to *Convert a grass field to artificial turf at Berens Park* Tactic since this project is projected to be completed in 2026.
- Revised the Wagner Community Center construction and referendum implementation progress communication and engagement Tactics to better reflect these initiatives continuing into 2027.

In Appendix C, all changes to the 2026 SWP are illustrated with **bold** text or text that is ~~struck through~~ to illustrate deletions.

At the August 10, 2026 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.

<u>RECOMMENDATION</u>

That the Board of Park Commissioners review and approve the attached 2026 Mid-Year Elevate Elmhurst Parks Plan Progress Report.

Thank you.

Attachment: 2026 Mid-Year Elevate Elmhurst Parks Progress Report

2026

Elevate Elmhurst Parks Progress Report

Mid-Year

Elmhurst Park District

ELEVATE ELMHURST PARKS mapping our future

Table of Contents

Introduction

The 2026 Mid-Year Elevate Elmhurst Parks Progress Report provides a snapshot of the District's progress towards implementing the Elevate Elmhurst Parks (EEP) Plan as of June 30, 2026. The Mid-Year Progress 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 Report includes the implementation progress of 2026 EEP Strategic Work Plan Tactics utilizing dashboards created in Microsoft Power BI software, a data analysis and visualization software. The Report does not include performance metric outcomes and analysis for EEP Priorities. Performance metrics will be reported in the 2026 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 2026 EEP Strategic Work Plan (last approved by the Board on December 8, 2025).

Turf & Surf Camp

New Wagner Community Center Construction

Eldridge Park Restroom Building Ribbon Cutting

Elevate Elmhurst Parks Strategy

Elmhurst Park District

Our Mission

We **enrich lives** while having fun!

ELEVATE ELMHURST PARKS mapping our future

Our Vision

To be a **national leader** in providing memorable parks and recreation experiences to **our community.**

Our Values

Customer Service Excellence

Belonging

Fun

Community Focused

Integrity

Our Strategic Priorities

Invigorated Parks
Enhance park amenities and open spaces

Vibrant Facilities
Expand and upgrade facilities

Dynamic Offerings
Expand program and service experiences

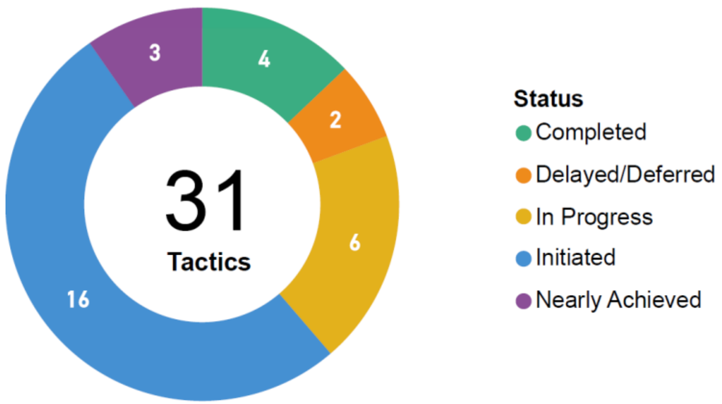
Engaged Community
Increase opportunities for communication and collaboration

Stronger Finances
Grow fiscal capacity

Thriving Culture
Foster a culture where every employee feels valued

Executive Summary

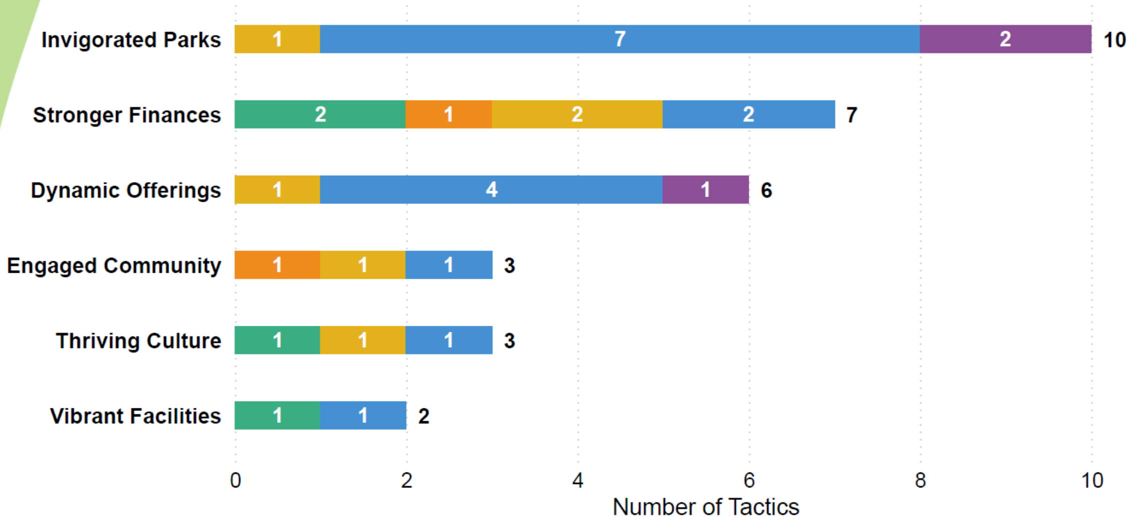
2026 Tactic Progress Summary



The Report includes reporting on thirty-one (31) 2026 Strategic Work Plan Tactics (SWP). As of June 30, **23% (7)** of Tactics were **completed** or **nearly achieved**, **71% (22)** were **in progress** or **initiated,** and **6% (2)** are being **deferred to future years**.

The chart on the left illustrates 2026 SWP Tactic implementation progress by status category to visualize the implementation status of Tactics as compared to the total number of Tactics. The definition of each progress status category is on page 29.

2026 Tactic Progress Status by Priority



The District has **initiated Tactic implementation across all Priorities**. Two (2) Priorities have one Tactic each that are being deferred to future years: Stronger Finances and Engaged Community.

The chart on the left illustrates the breakdown of 2026 SWP Tactic progress status by EEP Priority to visualize how 2026 SWP implementation progress affects each Priority.

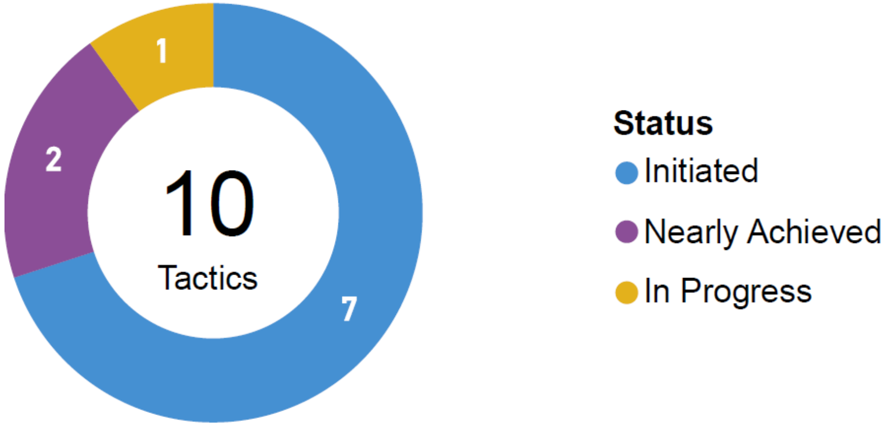
Strategic Work Plan Implementation Progress

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



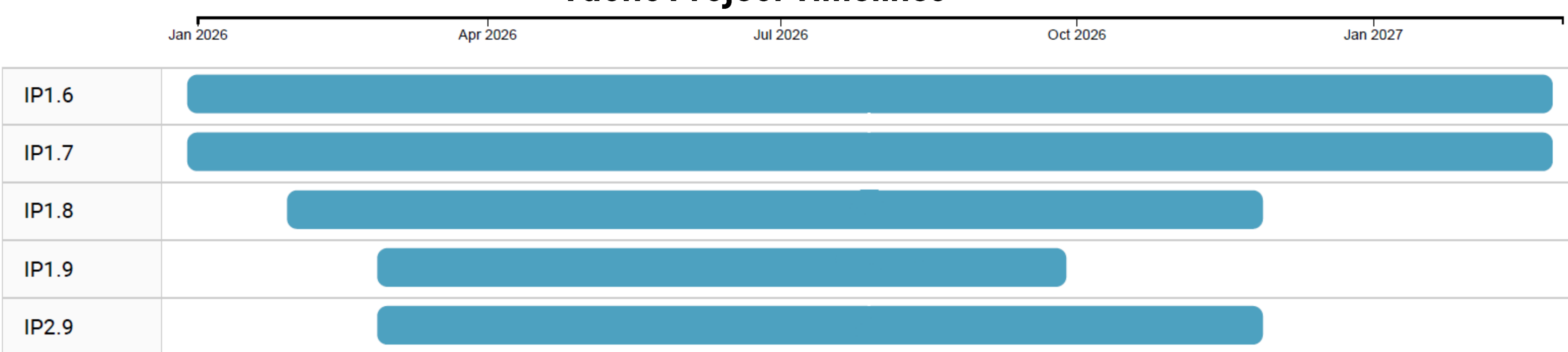
Invigorated Parks

Code[1]	Tactic	Status	Mid-Year Progress to Date
IP1.6	Complete Prairie Path restroom building design development and construction	Initiated	Board approved restroom building revised location and design (April 27 board meeting) after staff worked with Dewberry to reduce building footprint and with DuPage County to allow the District to build it closer to Prairie Path on County property (near Spring Road). Design development and construction documents completed and submitted permit application to both City of Elmhurst and DuPage County.
IP1.7	Complete design development and begin construction of Wilder Park bandshell	Initiated	Board approved Wilder Park South Master Plan, which includes Wilder Park bandshell location (February 9 board meeting). Started design development phase in coordination with Dewberry, Upland Design, and V3, including preparing drawings and supporting materials (plans, sections, elevations, construction details, and diagrammatic layouts) for the bandshell and applied for City of Elmhurst Planned Unit Development process.
IP1.8	Convert a grass field to artificial turf at Berens Park	In Progress	Completed excavation and grading and began placement of StormTraps. Board approved artificial turf purchase (May 26 board meeting). This Summer, backfill and fine grading will be completed in anticipation of turf installation in the Fall.
IP1.9	Complete design development for Wilder Park South Master Plan implementation and issue for bid	Initiated	Board approved Wilder Park South Master Plan (February 9 board meeting) and funding non-referendum Plan components using Tier 2 cash and investments (March 9 board meeting). Started design development phase in coordination with Dewberry, Upland Design, and V3, including preparing drawings and supporting materials (plans, sections, elevations, construction details, and diagrammatic layouts) for park paths and amenities.
IP2.9	Complete design development and construction documents for Wilder Park Recreation Building redevelopment	Initiated	Board approved Wilder Park South Master Plan (February 9 board meeting), including redevelopment of recreation building into restroom and greenroom facility (utilizing referendum funding). Also approved funding non-referendum Plan components using Tier 2 Cash and Investments (March 9 board meeting), including a portion of recreation building redevelopment. Contracted with Dewberry to provide architectural services.

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

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

Tactic Project Timelines



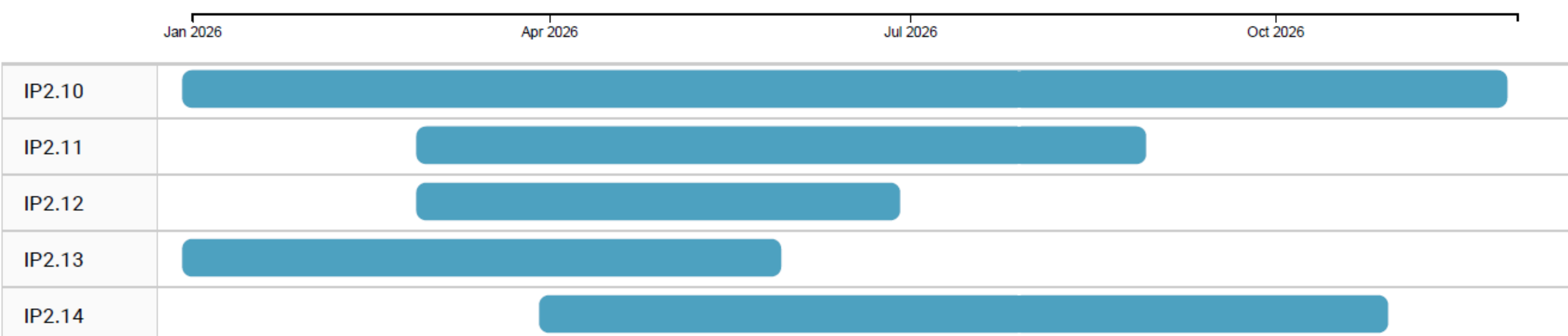
Invigorated Parks

Code[1]	Tactic	Status	Mid-Year Progress to Date
IP2.10	Begin Crestview Park Master Plan Phase 1 implementation, including replacing playground and constructing restroom building	◔	Board approved contracting with V3 to complete design development, construction documents, bid specifications, and permitting (January 26 board meeting). Design development complete. Board approved layout adjustments due to underground utility lines and the purchase of playground equipment (May 11 board meeting). Began initial review of construction documents.
IP2.11	Develop Jaycee Tot Lot Master Plan	◔	Held Jaycee Tot Lot public input meeting on June 4 with 25 people in attendance. Prepared two concept designs based on input. In July, concepts will be shared to gather feedback in an online community survey.
IP2.12	Replace Berens Park tennis courts	◕	Board approved contract with Chicagoland Paving Contractors (February 23 board meeting). Completed courts and fencing demolition, site grading, the first lift of asphalt, and fence posts and light pole footings installation.
IP2.13	Redevelop Berens Park mini golf site	◕	Board approved contract with Turf Solutions (February 9 board meeting). Began construction in March with majority of the project completed in May. Ribbon cutting held on May 30. Accent boulders will be added as course features in July.
IP2.14	Execute Plunkett Park ball diamond and paving improvements	◔	Board approved contract with Hacienda Landscape (April 13 board meeting). Began City of Elmhurst permitting process and construction to begin in July.

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

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

Tactic Project Timelines Continued



Vibrant Facilities

Expand and upgrade facilities

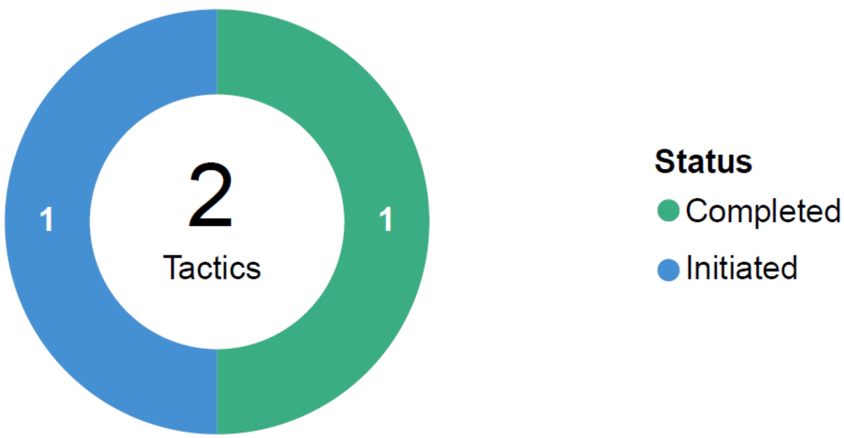
Objectives

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

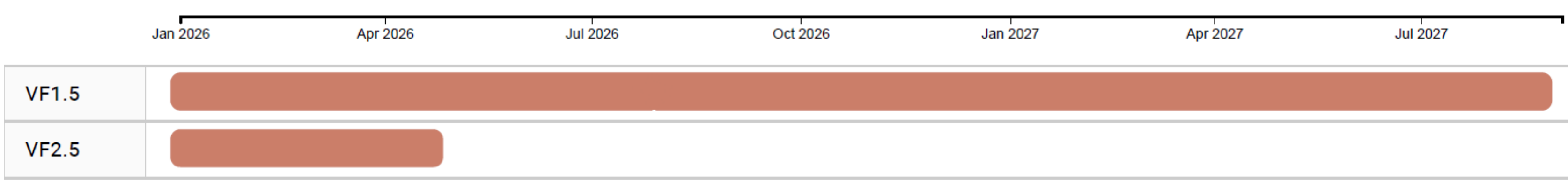


Code [1]	Tactic	Status	Mid-Year Progress to Date
VF1.5	Construct new Wagner Community Center	◔	Project in partial bid and early construction phase. Significant progress has been made on site preparation and foundation work. Completed StormTrap excavation and began installation in June. Site grading, fill placement, and compaction are ongoing throughout the parking lot and building areas. Completed all water, sewer, and sanitary utility tie-ins and leveling and foundation excavation of the building site. Board approved bid packages #3-6. Precast panel construction and installation to begin this summer.
VF2.5	Complete American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) audit for Courts Plus	●	Evaluator reviewed the District's utility bills and conducted an onsite visit to install data loggers on major mechanical equipment. Met with evaluator to review findings and discuss potential energy-saving opportunities. Based on the findings, began ComEd program application process, which may provide approximately $20,000 in annual savings by reducing energy costs.

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

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

Tactic Project Timelines



Dynamic Offerings

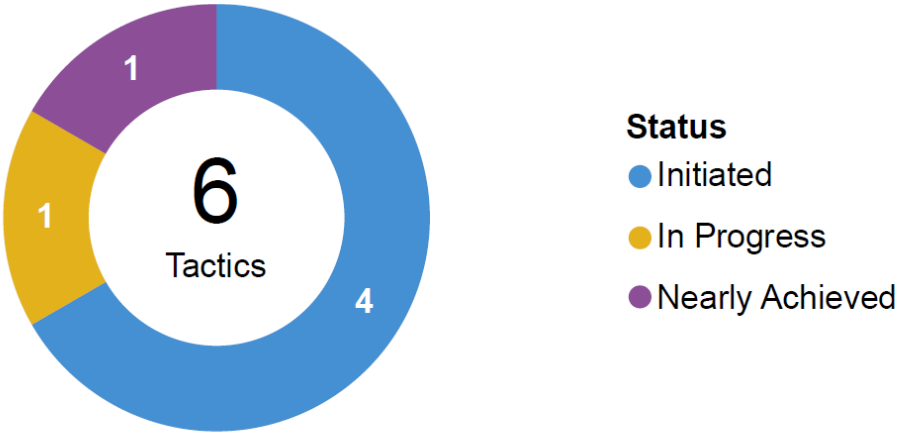
Expand program and service experiences

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



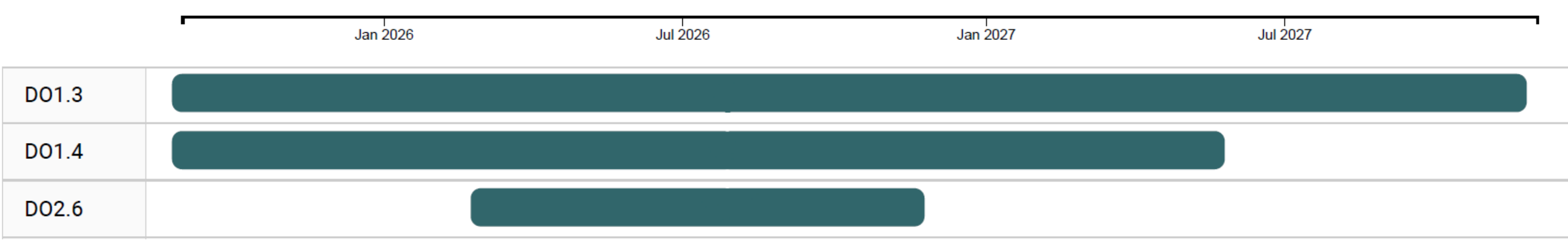
Dynamic Offerings

Code[1]	Tactic	Status	Mid-Year Progress to Date
DO1.3	Optimize program offerings and scheduling to improve fill rate across all programs	Initiated	Began reviewing program enrollment, fill rates, scheduling patterns, facility utilization, and opportunities to consolidate or reposition underperforming offerings. Developing program portfolio and scheduling frameworks for new Wagner Community Center (WCC) to guide program placement, scheduling priorities, space utilization, and future performance monitoring.
DO1.4	Assess program age segmentation and create action plan to drive future program planning	Initiated	Developed standardized age-segmentation framework to support consistent program planning across Recreation and Special Use Facilities Departments. Completed preliminary demographic analysis to compare program age groups with the age distribution of Elmhurst residents. Incorporating age-group participation targets into WCC program plan to help identify gaps, avoid overconcentration in individual age groups, and support a balanced program portfolio.
DO2.6	Begin offering programs at Canine Corner	In Progress	Introduced initial Canine Corner program and special-event opportunities, including moving Doggie Eggstravaganza to Canine Corner and offering A One Year Anniversary Celebration, Pupcorn and a Movie, and Howl-a-Ween Dog Costume Contest. Focused on introducing sustainable offerings that complement normal dog park use and strengthen community engagement. Additional program concepts, partnerships, scheduling opportunities, and promotional strategies to be developed and tested throughout 2026.

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

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

Tactic Project Timelines



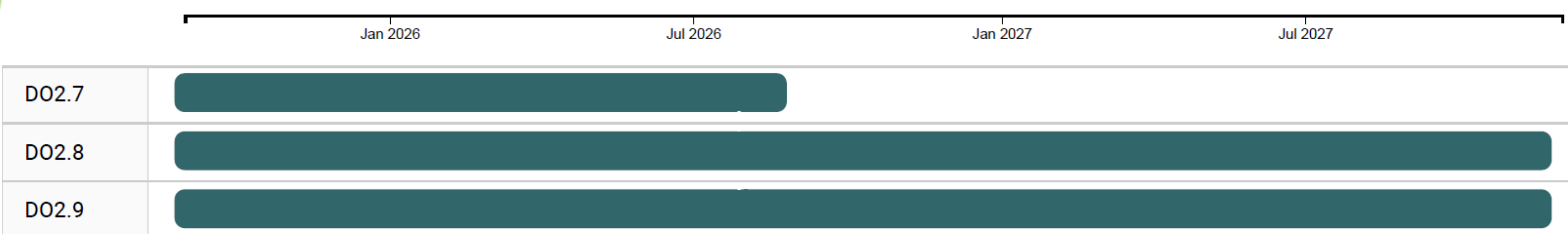
Dynamic Offerings

Code[1]	Tactic	Status	Mid-Year Progress to Date
DO2.7	Explore options to expand maximum number of Rec Station registrants		For the 2026-27 school year, increased the maximum number of students permitted to register at Edison School by 15% (from 65 to 75). Utilizing WCC planning process to identify opportunities to potentially offer additional Before & After School programming.
DO2.8	Expand wellness offerings for all ages		Recreation and Special Use Facilities staff began identifying opportunities to expand wellness programming beyond traditional adult fitness classes, including youth, families, adults, and active adults offerings, as well as opportunities related to fitness, mindfulness, recovery, nutrition, and social wellness. Staff also investigating punch card or drop-in enrollment offerings. Utilizing WCC planning process to identify appropriate spaces, schedules, staffing models, partnerships, and premium wellness opportunities.
DO2.9	Add new programs or special events that promote adult recreation and involvement		Began assessing opportunities to expand adult recreation through leagues, open play, instructional programs, wellness activities, social recreation, enrichment programs, and special events. Introduced new adult recreation programs, including Goat Meditation, Learn to Sign (American Sign Language), Yoga in the Garden with Live Acoustic Guitar, and Adult Latin Dancing. Incorporating adult programming into WCC program portfolio and facility scheduling plans, with particular attention to evening and weekend opportunities.

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

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

Tactic Project Timelines



Engaged Community

Increase opportunities for communication and collaboration

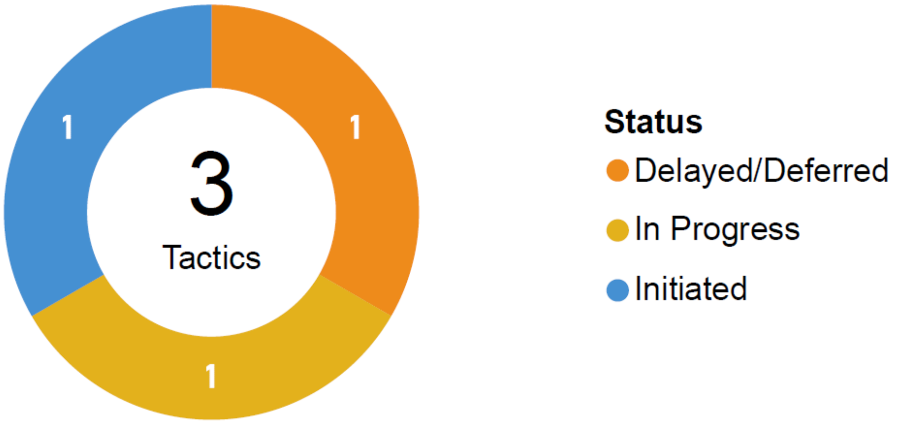
Objectives

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



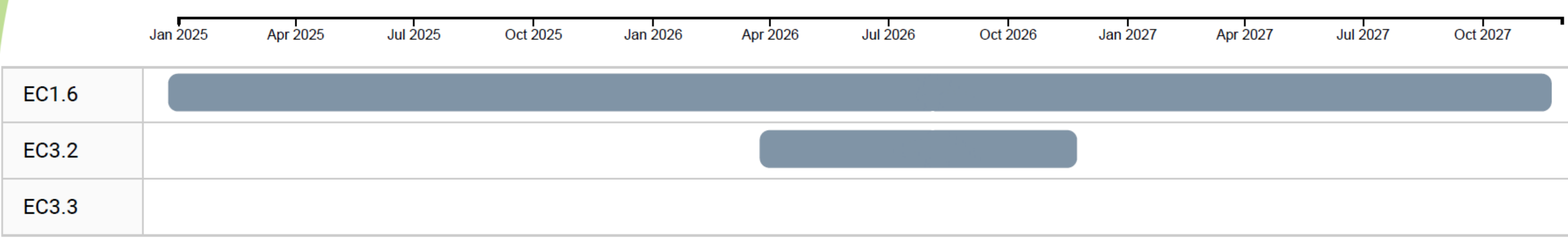
Engaged Community

Code [1]	Tactic	Status	Mid-Year Progress to Date
EC1.6	Communicate referendum implementation progress and engage with community about projects		Continued to post referendum project updates on District website monthly and distribute Wagner Community Center (WCC) neighbor letters quarterly to provide updates. McHugh+Nacional attended the Egg Hunt in March to provide updates to the community and answer questions about WCC construction. Held ribbon cutting for Eldridge Restroom building on April 11. Later this summer, a mid-year progress update and video on all referendum projects will be shared with the community.
EC3.2	Begin review of existing partnership agreements		Created criteria and written assessment to evaluate the status of partner relationships to identify which high-priority partnerships and associated agreements would benefit from review and to determine appropriate timing. Partner assessment criteria include, but are not limited to communication, collaboration, accountability, conflict resolution, long-term sustainability, resource sharing, flexibility, adaption to change, etc.
EC3.3	Identify and seek new partners		Tactic is deferred to a future year.

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

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

Tactic Project Timelines



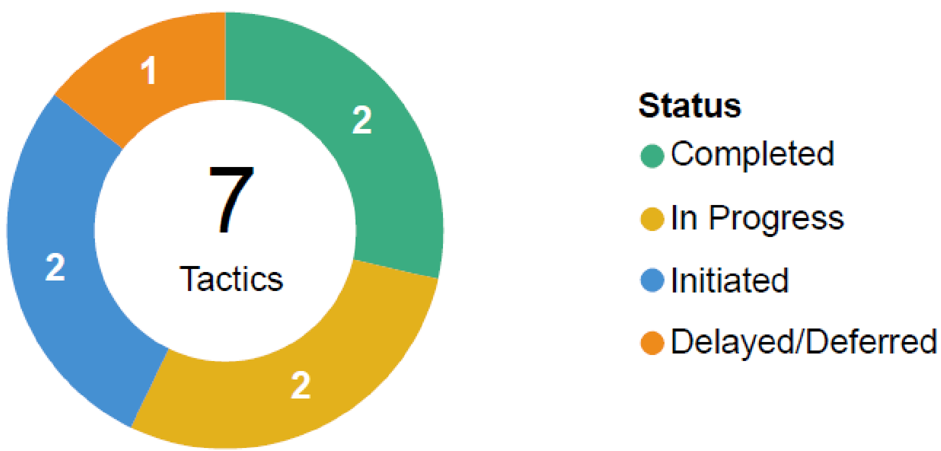
Stronger Finances

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



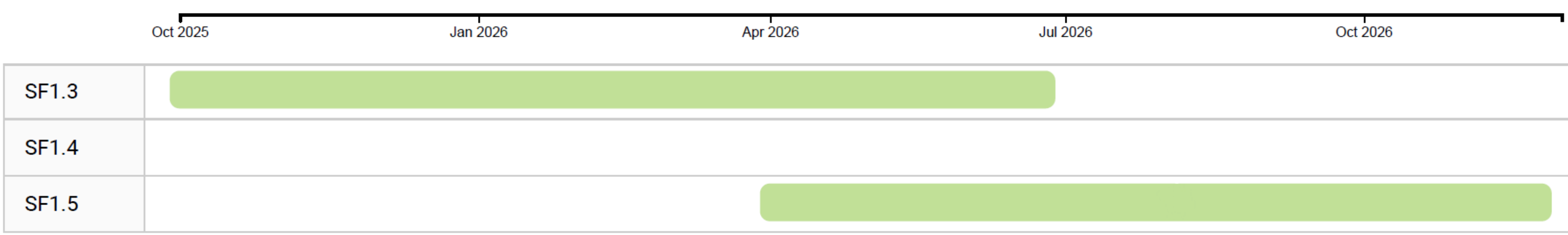
Stronger Finances

Code [1]	Tactic	Status	Mid-Year Progress to Date
SF1.3	Develop operating plan and budget to successfully operate the new Wagner Community Center		Created a task force with representatives from all departments. Began regular meetings to develop operating plan categories and sub-groups such as, but not limited to programming, facilities, guest services, and risk management. Worked as a task force and in sub-groups to research, develop, and review the operating plan categories. Began development of draft operating plan document.
SF1.4	Develop operating plan and budget to successfully operate the Wilder Park bandshell		This tactic is deferred to 2027.
SF1.5	Begin updating cost recovery model		Reviewed District cost recovery model and prioritized applying the District's existing model to new WCC operating budget. Once that work is complete, staff will reconvene to evaluate the model, make any necessary refinements, and develop a plan for District-wide implementation.

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

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

Tactic Project Timelines



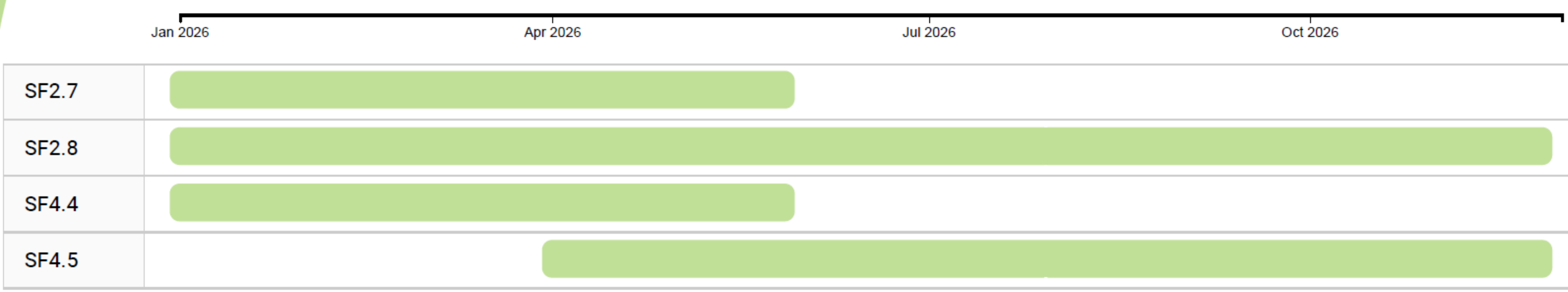
Stronger Finances

Code [1]	Tactic	Status	Mid-Year Progress to Date
SF2.7	Complete evaluation of long-term bonding capability to leverage debt capacity for funding capital projects		Worked with District financial advisor and completed an analysis of debt capability and future available reserves. Based on the analysis, Executive Director determined it is in the District's best interest to postpone the consideration of new debt with long-term financial impacts until completing referendum facility project construction and opening.
SF2.8	Seek alternate revenue to offset Elevate Elmhurst Parks capital project costs		Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) released $190,000 grant for Crestview Park playground equipment replacement. District received confirmation that $220,000 for the proposed 2027 Jaycee Tot Lot redevelopment is in 2027 State of Illinois budget.
SF4.4	Convert 50% of toggle light switches to automatic light switches		Converted 50% of toggle switches to automatic light switches across the District, which will help enforce energy-saving habits, reduce energy waste, and minimize unnecessary electricity use.
SF4.5	Update lighting at Eldridge and Wilder Parks and Prairie Path to LED		Two lighting companies came onsite to evaluate lighting projects. These companies work with ComEd to help customers with the ComEd rebate program, which can lower LED conversion project pricing. Staff is waiting on pricing and eligibility information for the ComEd program.

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

[1]The 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

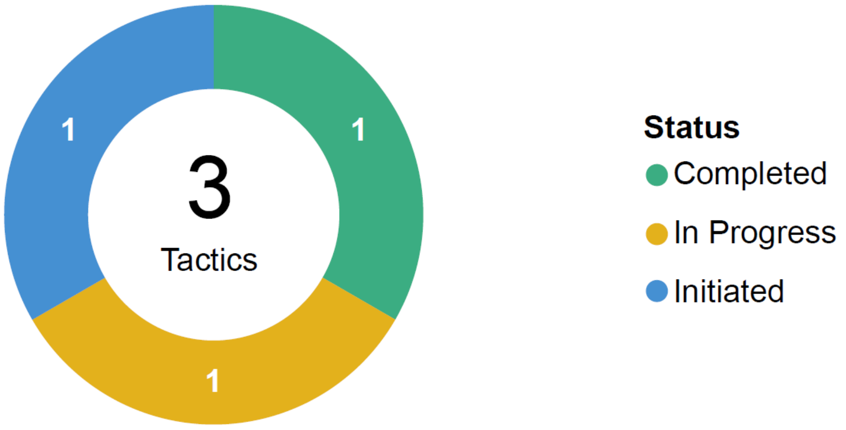
TC1: Enhance employee development opportunities

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



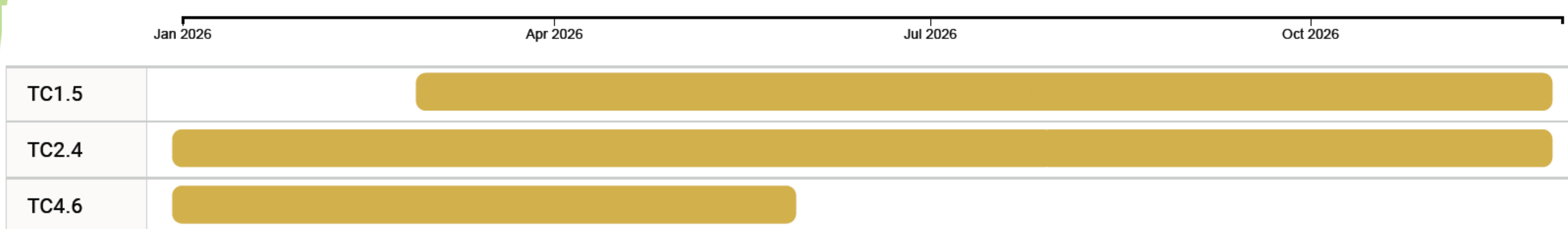
Thriving Culture

Code[1]	Tactic	Status	Mid-Year Progress to Date
TC1.5	Offer trainings to assist employees with addressing training plans		Developed and delivered trainings on Time Management and New Brand System. Development is currently underway for additional sessions, including Financial Overview, Strategic Planning, and Having Difficult Conversations.
TC2.4	Host quarterly virtual "Ask HR" sessions for both supervisory and non-supervisory staff		Hosted "Ask HR" sessions for the 1st and 2nd quarters. Topics for supervisory staff included performance conversations, documentation basics, and time management. Topics for all staff included benefits and wellness, career development, learning opportunities, and internal mobility.
TC4.6	Provide training and resources on the District's Values to further a Values-based culture		Developed and launched new Values and Values Recognition Program training video and Values behavior handouts at the All-District Training in March. For the All-District Training, hired a professional speaker, who included in the interactive training how to create a Values-based culture utilizing the District Values and related Values behaviors. After the training, shared Values and Values Recognition Program resources with all District staff and reinforced the Values Behaviors at the April and June Full-time All-Staff meetings.

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

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

Tactic Project Timelines



Appendices

Appendix A:
Elevate Elmhurst Parks Overview

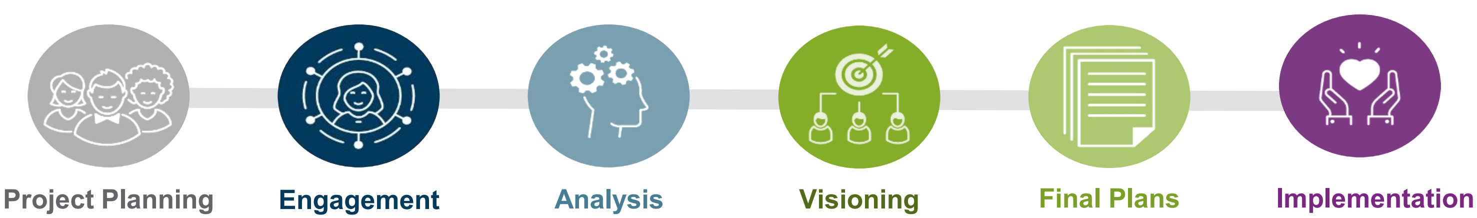
Elevate Elmhurst Parks – Mapping our Future

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 using community feedback to shape plans and define future priorities, the Park Board provides clear 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 (EEP) Plan, which included the Plan document and Appendices. Together, these documents provide a summary of the EEP 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 five years. The EEP Plan incorporates broad priorities, goals, and objectives for comprehensive planning (e.g., physical asset and program improvements) and strategic planning (e.g., financial improvements, engagement and communications, and internal operations and culture). The six priorities of the EEP Plan are Invigorated Parks, Vibrant Facilities, Dynamic Offerings, Engaged Community, Stronger Finances, and Thriving Culture.

To review the EEP Plan document and learn more about Elevate Elmhurst Parks, click here.

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 B: Key Terms and Definitions

The following are definitions for key terms used in the Elevate Elmhurst Parks 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 — To implement Strategic and Comprehensive Plan priorities, describe department or agency plans for upcoming and future years. 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 and Objectives.

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

Strategic Plan — a long-range planning tool updated every three to five years and developed through a community planning process. It provides direction regarding the agency's 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 — describe and represent what is important in the way employees and customers are treated and relates to 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.

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

Tactic Progress Status 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.

Appendix C:
2026 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
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 ○ Indoor Facilities Average Age ○ % of Office Space Square Footage Upgraded
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 ○ Partnership Rating
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 - *Future*
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	

ELEVATE ELMHURST PARKS
2026 STRATEGIC WORK PLAN TACTICS

Priority	Objectives	Tactics	Anticipated Start	Anticipated Completion	Cost Level of Magnitude	Status	Lead Role	Staff Groups	Implementation Goal
Invigorated Parks	IP1	Complete Prairie Path restroom building **design development and** construction	**January-26**	**March-27**	$$$	Initiated	Director of Referendum Project Construction	Facilities, Parks, Marketing and Communications, **IT**	Working with Dewberry, complete design development, permitting, bid process, and construction based on Park Board approval of year-round restroom building near the Prairie Path.
Invigorated Parks	IP1	Complete design development and begin construction of Wilder Park bandshell ~~with restrooms~~	January-26	**March-27**	$$$$$	Initiated	Director of Referendum Project Construction	Wilder Park South Planning Task Force	Complete City of Elmhurst Planned Unit Development process, bid process, and permitting, and begin construction of Wilder Park bandshell ~~with year-round restrooms~~.
Invigorated Parks	IP1	~~Begin~~ **Convert**~~ing~~ a grass field to artificial turf at Berens Park	February-26	December-26	$$$$	In Progress	Director of Referendum Project Construction	Parks, Recreation, Marketing and Communications	In conjunction with construction of new Wagner Community Center, start turf field construction, including excavation, grading, drainage, stormwater tie in, and utilities; construction will be completed in 2027.
Invigorated Parks	IP1	**Complete design development for Wilder Park South Master Plan implementation and issue for bid**	**March-26**	**October-26**	**$$$**	Initiated	**Director of Referendum Project Construction**	**Parks, Facilities, Project Task Force**	**Working with Upland Design and coordinating with Dewberry (as it relates to the bandshell), complete design development and permitting and issue construction documents for bid.**
Invigorated Parks	IP2	**Complete design development and construction documents for Wilder Park Recreation Building redevelopment**	**March-26**	**December-26**	**$$**	Initiated	**Director of Referendum Project Construction**	**Facilities**	**Working with Dewberry, complete design development, apply for permit, and prepare to issue for bid in the second quarter 2027.**
Invigorated Parks	IP2	Begin Crestview Park Master Plan Phase 1 implementation, including replacing playground and constructing restroom building	January-26	**December-26**	$$$$$	Initiated	Assistant Director/Director of Parks	Administration, Facilities, Recreation, Parks, Marketing and Communications	Contract with V3 to assist with construction documents and bid specifications and coordinate with restroom building plans and implement all improvements concurrently.
Invigorated Parks	IP2	Develop Jaycee Tot Lot Master Plan	March-26	**September-26**	$	Initiated	Parks Planner	Administration, Facilities, Marketing and Communications, Parks	To develop a master plan prior to playground replacement in 2027, complete a topographic survey, plan development, public meetings to garner community input, and presentation of the draft master plan to the Park Board for review and approval.
Invigorated Parks	IP2	Replace Berens Park tennis courts	**March-26**	July-26	$$$$$	Nearly Achieved	Assistant Director/Director of Parks	Special Use Facilities, Facilities, Parks, Marketing and Communications	Complete the removal and replacement of the existing tennis courts and amenities, including fences and lights.
Invigorated Parks	IP2	Redevelop Berens Park mini golf site	January-26	**July-26**	$$$	Nearly Achieved	Division Manager - Facilities	Facilities, Parks, Marketing and Communications, Recreation	Replace existing mini golf course with fully upgraded, professionally designed facility (utilizing the Modular Advantage system) by completing demolition, site re-grading, and installation of new course features including turf, sidewalks, signage, and all necessary infrastructure.

ELEVATE ELMHURST PARKS
2026 STRATEGIC WORK PLAN TACTICS

Priority	Objectives	Tactics	Anticipated Start	Anticipated Completion	Cost Level of Magnitude	Status	Lead Role	Staff Groups	Implementation Goal
Invigorated Parks	IP2	Execute Plunkett Park ball diamond and paving improvements	April-26	November-26	$$$$$	Initiated	Assistant Director/Director of Parks	Facilities, Marketing and Communications, Parks	Complete the removal and replacement of existing ballfield pathways, backstops, and amenities including upgrading the fences and seating areas and adding a new shade system and backstop netting.
Vibrant Facilities	VF1	**Construct** ~~Continue~~ new Wagner Community Center ~~construction~~	January-26	**September-27**	$$$$$	Initiated	Director of Referendum Project Construction	All Departments	Continue Wagner Community Center construction, which began in 2025, including procurement of steel and precast, foundations, underground mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP), exterior enclosures, interior construction, and parking lot drainage; construction will continue into 2027 to open the facility in Fall 2027.
Vibrant Facilities	VF2	Complete American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) audit for Courts Plus	January-26	**May-26**	$	Completed	Director of Facilities	Facilities	Complete an ASHRAE audit through a comprehensive evaluation of building energy systems to help identify a broader range of Energy Conservation Measures (ECMs) and offer a preliminary financial analysis to support and justify implementation.
Dynamic Offerings	DO1	Optimize program offerings and scheduling to improve fill rate across all programs	September-25	**December-27**	$	Initiated	Director of Recreation & Director of Special Use Facilities	Recreation, Special Use Facilities	Increase overall average program fill rate from 62% (baseline) to 75% in 2026 through program consolidation, schedule adjustments, and targeted marketing.
Dynamic Offerings	DO1	Assess program age segmentation and create action plan to drive future program planning	September-25	**June-27**	$	Initiated	Director of Recreation & Director of Special Use Facilities	Recreation, Special Use Facilities	Develop a clear age-segmentation framework that correlates to the age segmentation of the City of Elmhurst and action plan to guide program planning.
Dynamic Offerings	DO2	Begin offering programs at Canine Corner	**March-26**	December-26	$	In Progress	Director of Recreation	Recreation, Marketing and Communications	Successfully launch and sustain new recreation programs and events at Canine Corner.
Dynamic Offerings	DO2	Explore options to expand maximum number of Rec Station registrants	September-25	**September-26**	$$	Nearly Achieved	Director of Recreation	Recreation	Increase the maximum number of Rec Station program registrants by addressing space, staffing, and operational limitations within the 2026-27 school year.
Dynamic Offerings	DO2	Expand wellness offerings for all ages	September-25	**December-27**	$	Initiated	Director of Recreation & Director of Special Use Facilities	Recreation, Special Use Facilities, Marketing and Communications	Introduce and expand age-inclusive wellness offerings to increase participation in wellness programs by 20% by the end of 2026.
Dynamic Offerings	DO2	Add new programs or special events that promote adult recreation and involvement	September-25	**December-27**	$	Initiated	Director of Recreation & Director of Special Use Facilities	Recreation, Special Use Facilities, Marketing and Communications	Increase adult recreation participation by 15% by the end of 2026 through new programs and special events.

ELEVATE ELMHURST PARKS
2026 STRATEGIC WORK PLAN TACTICS

Priority	Objectives	Tactics	Anticipated Start	Anticipated Completion	Cost Level of Magnitude	Status	Lead Role	Staff Groups	Implementation Goal
Engaged Community	EC1	~~Continue communicating~~ **Communicate** referendum implementation progress and engage with community about projects	January-25	**December-27**	#	In Progress	Director of Marketing and Communications	Community Engagement and Communications Task Force	~~Enhance referendum project communications by sharing regular progress updates and offering opportunities for community and staff engagement through events, feedback channels, and digital platforms.~~ **Provide monthly communications to internal and external audiences regarding referendum implementation progress, including project updates, construction milestones, and community engagement opportunities along with targeted outreach to neighbors impacted by construction activities (e.g., advance notice of potential construction and traffic impacts), while celebrating key achievements such as ribbon cuttings and project completions.**
Engaged Community	EC3	Begin review of existing partnership agreements	**April-26**	December-26	#	Initiated	Executive Director	Administration, Management Team	Establish criteria for prioritizing and scheduling the review of District partnership agreements and begin reviewing high priority partnership agreements with the appropriate partners, including terms and conditions, roles and responsibilities, dispute resolution procedures, etc.
Engaged Community	EC3	Identify and seek new partners	**To be determined**	**To be determined**	#	**Delayed/Deferred**	Director of Marketing and Communications	Administration, Marketing and Communications, Strategy and Planning	Collaborate with staff to identify potential new partners, conduct outreach, and secure partnerships that support the District's mission and advance strategic priorities.
Stronger Finances	SF1	Develop operating plan and budget to successfully operate the new Wagner Community Center	October-25	July-26	#	In Progress	Assistant Director/Director of Parks	Management Team and other departmental staff	Create a comprehensive operating and financial plan for the new Wagner Community Center focused on programing, administration, and maintenance.
Stronger Finances	SF1	Develop operating plan and budget to successfully operate the Wilder Park bandshell	**July-27**	**December-27**	#	**Delayed/Deferred**	Director of Marketing and Communications & Director of Recreation	Marketing and Communications, Recreation	Create operating plan and budget that support the successful operation and programming of the Wilder Park bandshell.
Stronger Finances	SF1	Begin updating cost recovery model	**April-26**	**December-26**	#	Initiated	Director of Finance	Finance, Recreation, Special Use Facilities	Form a staff team to compile data to review current cost recovery levels, program and service categories, and category definitions and determine cost recovery levels for each category to finalize new model.
Stronger Finances	SF2	Complete evaluation of long-term bonding capability to leverage debt capacity for funding capital projects	January-26	June-26	#	Completed	Director of Finance	Administration, Finance, Strategy and Planning	Work with bond advisor to determine how best to leverage long-term debt capacity to fund annual asset management and large-scale projects following retirement of the 2014A G.O. Limited Tax Park Refunding Bond (approximately $500,000 per year).
Stronger Finances	SF2	Seek alternate revenue to offset Elevate Elmhurst Parks capital project costs	January-26	December-26	#	In Progress	Executive Director	Marketing and Communications, Facilities, Parks, Finance, Administration	To address Elevate capital project priorities, investigate and secure alternate sources of revenue such as grants (e.g., State of Illinois), donations (e.g., individuals, community partners), sponsorships, etc.

Priority	Objectives	Tactics	Anticipated Start	Anticipated Completion	Cost Level of Magnitude	Status	Lead Role	Staff Groups	Implementation Goal
Stronger Finances	SF4	Convert 50% of toggle light switches to automatic light switches	January-26	June-26	$	Completed	Director of Facilities	Facilities	Switch from toggle light switches to automatic light switches to help enforce energy-saving habits, reduce energy waste, and minimize unnecessary electricity use.
Stronger Finances	SF4	Update lighting at Eldridge and Wilder Parks and Prairie Path to LED	April-26	December-26	$	Initiated	Director of Facilities	Facilities	Transition to LED lighting to lower energy consumption, resulting in reduced electricity bills and overhead costs, as LED lights are significantly more energy-efficient and have a much longer lifespan than traditional bulbs.
Thriving Culture	TC1	Offer trainings to assist employees with addressing training plans	March-26	December-26	#	Initiated	Director of Human Resources & Risk	Human Resources	Begin developing targeted training sessions to support employees in executing their individual training plans.
Thriving Culture	TC2	Host quarterly virtual "Ask HR" sessions for both supervisory and non-supervisory staff	January-26	December-26	#	In Progress	Director of Human Resources & Risk	Human Resources	Establish and host quarterly virtual 'Ask HR' sessions for both supervisory and non-supervisory staff, with the goal of addressing employee questions and providing timely HR-related support.
Thriving Culture	TC4	Provide training and resources on the District's Values to further a Values-based culture	January-26	June-26	$	Completed	Director of Strategy & Planning	Strategy and Planning, Human Resources, Marketing and Communications	Create and implement training and resources (e.g., video, handouts, training presentations/tools) for all employees based on the Values behaviors reviewed and drafted by the Values Recognition Program Task Force based on employee feedback.

Cost Symbol Key

$	$1-$25,000
$$	$25,001-$100,000
$$$	$100,001-$500,000
$$$$	$500,001-$1,000,000
$$$$$	>$1,000,000
#	Indirect Cost Expenses Only

Status Key

Not Started (0%)
Initiated (25%)
In Progress (50%)
Nearly Achieved (75%)
Completed (100%)
Delayed/Deferred