WINNETKA PARK DISTRICT | FISCAL YEAR 2027 – 2031

# Strategic Plan

Adopted by the Winnetka Park District
Board of Commisioners on July 23, 2026

Winnetka Park District 540 Hibbard Road, Winnetka, IL 60093 winpark.org

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# Executive Summary

## Winnetka Park District

The Winnetka Park District (the "District") is an independent unit of local government established under the Illinois Park District Code and governed by a seven-member elected Board of Park Commissioners. The District serves residents of the Village of Winnetka and portions of the Villages of Northfield, Glencoe, and Kenilworth, and is the largest open space landowner within the Village of Winnetka boundaries. The District is responsible for the planning, development, operation, and stewardship of parks, beaches, lakefront, recreation programs, golf, ice, tennis, platform tennis, and associated facilities.

## The Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan (the "Plan") establishes the District's priorities, goals, and objectives for Fiscal Years 2027 through 2031. The Plan is grounded in the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP), which was developed through a multi-method public engagement process that included a statistically valid community-wide survey, an open community survey, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and public open houses. The community priorities identified through that process are reflected in the 18 CMP Focus Areas and carry directly into the goals and objectives that follow. The Plan is designed to operate alongside individual park site and area master plans, the District's Long-Range Capital Plan, and annual operating and capital budgets.

## The Plan was developed through a structured, cross-functional process involving five staff working groups:

- **Parks**
- **Administration**
- **Recreation**
- **Tennis**
- **Ice**

An initial set of 122 objectives was consolidated through multiple rounds of staff workshops into 67 objectives organized within 22 goals and six categories. Every change was documented through a line-item crosswalk that traces staff input to final plan content.

The six strategic categories are: (1) Meet Present and Future Needs of the Community; (2) Enhance Services and Facilities; (3) Improve Processes and Efficiencies; (4) Develop Collaborative Solutions; (5) Enhance Community Engagement; and (6) Build the Team and Develop Skills. Each category is aligned to specific CMP Focus Areas to ensure the Plan implements, rather than duplicates, the community-driven priorities established through the CMP process.

The Plan supports the District's pursuit of national accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) and Illinois Distinguished Accreditation. Implementation will be measured through performance tools developed under Goal 3.3.3, with quarterly reporting to the Board and the community. The Annual Implementation Plan associated with the Plan is reviewed annually by the Executive Director and senior leadership and updated as needed to reflect changing conditions, available resources, and emerging priorities. It is then included in the annual budget process for formal adoption by the Board.

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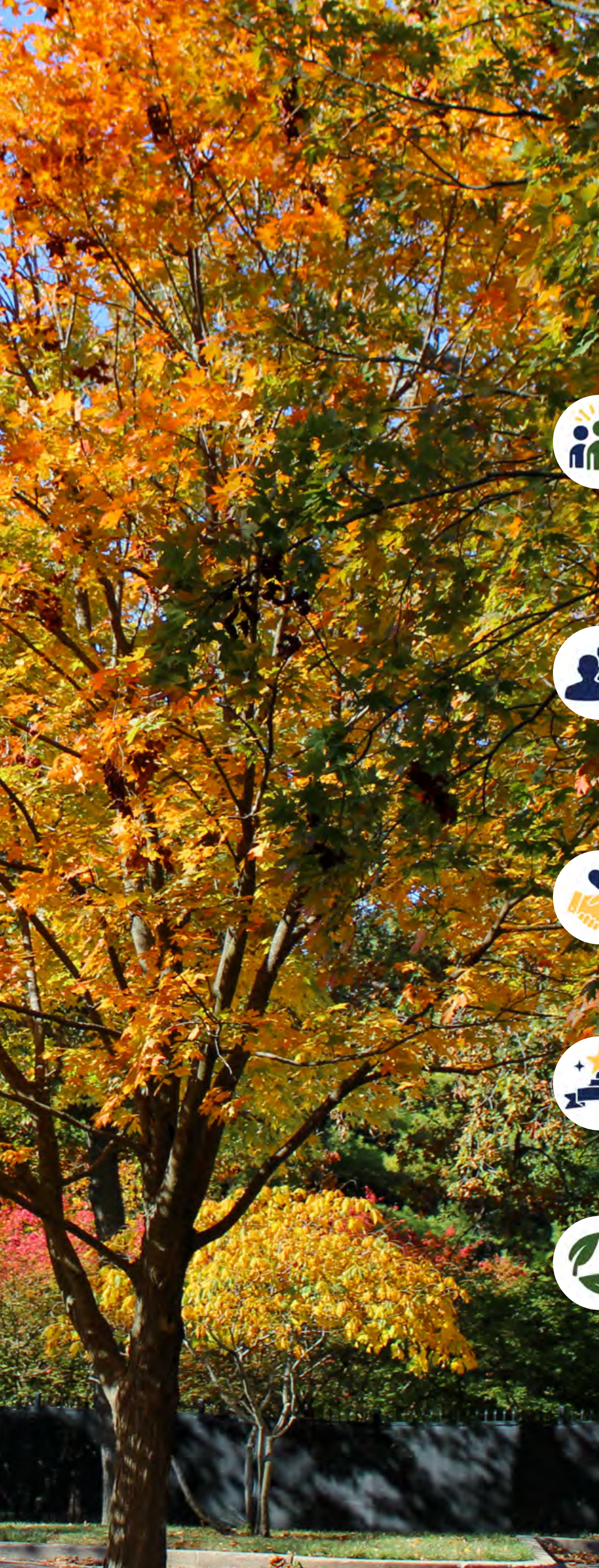
# Mission

Our mission is to provide a balance of quality recreation and leisure opportunities while protecting assets, natural resources, and open space to benefit present and future generations.

# Vision

To enrich our community by preserving natural resources and open spaces, providing quality recreational opportunities, and maintaining recreational spaces that support healthy, active lifestyles for residents of all ages and abilities.



# Core Values

### Community
We actively engage with our community to understand evolving needs, ensure equitable access, and deliver inclusive programs, services, and spaces that enhance quality of life.

### Accountability
We operate with integrity, transparency, and responsibility, making informed decisions, communicating openly, and holding ourselves accountable for outcomes and stewardship of resources.

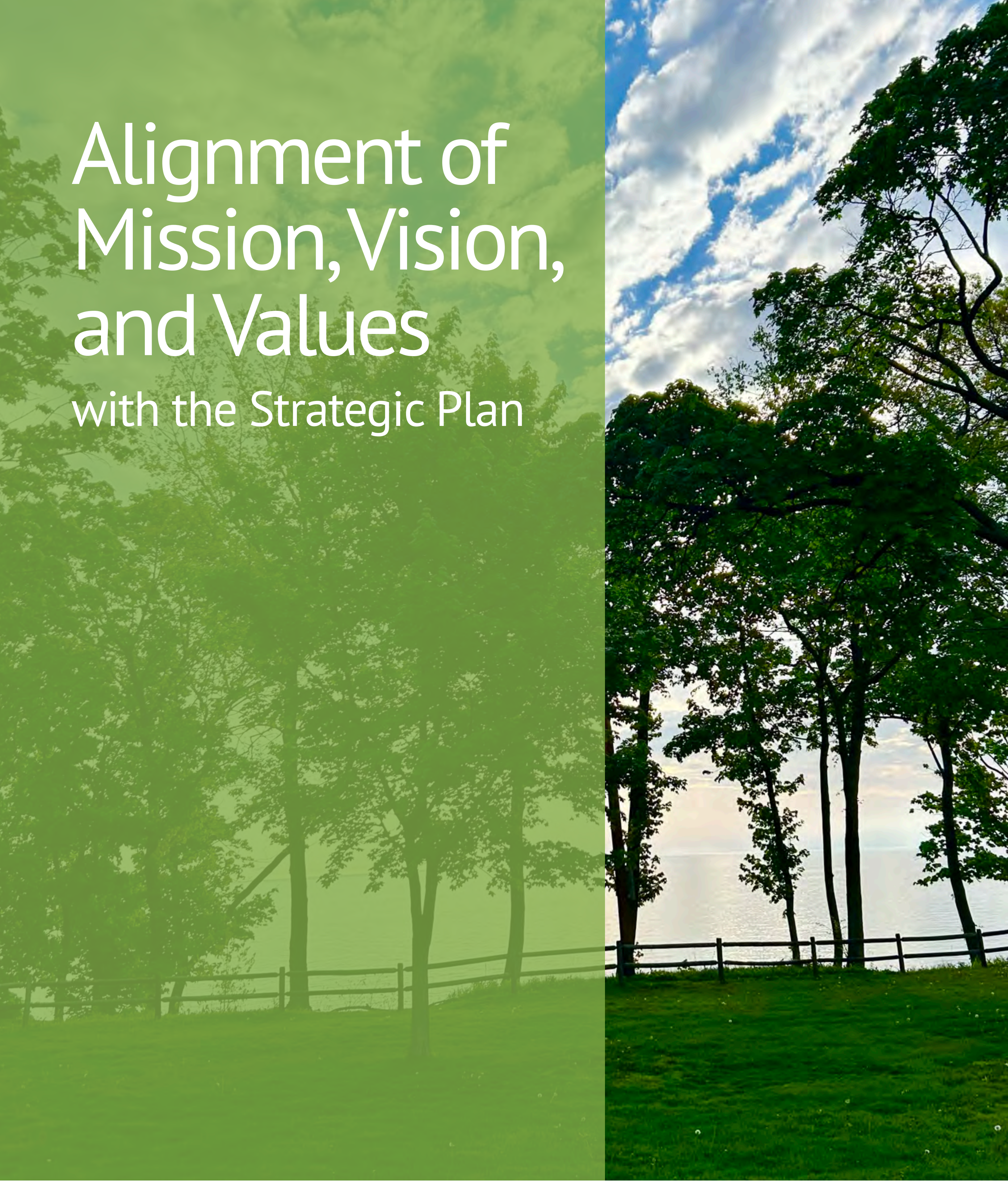
### Respect
We foster a culture of respect and inclusion by valuing diverse perspectives, creating welcoming environments, and treating all individuals with dignity and professionalism.

### Excellence
We deliver high-quality services through innovation, continuous improvement, professional expertise, and responsiveness to community needs.

### Sustainability
We practice responsible stewardship of our parks, facilities, and environment to support long-term financial stability, ecological health, and the well-being of present and future generations.

# Alignment of Mission, Vision, and Values

## with the Strategic Plan



**The goals and objectives that follow are derived from and accountable to the District's Mission, Vision, and Values. Each of the six strategic categories advances specific elements of those statements:**

**CATEGORY 1 | Meet Present and Future Needs of the Community,** advances the Mission's commitment to providing a balance of quality recreation and leisure opportunities that meet evolving community needs, and operationalizes the Community value through programming, access, and master planning.

**CATEGORY 2 | Enhance Services and Facilities,** advances the Mission's commitment to protecting assets, natural resources, and open space, and supports the Vision's emphasis on preserving natural resources and maintaining recreational spaces. It operationalizes the Sustainability value through protection and stewardship of natural areas, asset management, ecological health, and capital renewal.

**CATEGORY 3 | Improve Processes and Efficiencies,** supports the Vision by strengthening the internal systems and organizational practices needed to provide quality recreational opportunities and maintain recreational spaces, and operationalizes the Accountability value through financial management, governance, accreditation, and policy discipline.

**CATEGORY 4 | Develop Collaborative Solutions,** supports the Vision's commitment to enriching the community through quality recreational opportunities, preserved natural resources, and well-maintained recreational spaces, and operationalizes the Community and Respect values through intergovernmental coordination, partnerships with schools, and broader stakeholder engagement.

**CATEGORY 5 | Enhance Community Engagement,** advances the Vision's commitment to enriching the community and supporting healthy, active lifestyles for residents of all ages and abilities, and operationalizes the Community, Respect, and Accountability values through transparent communication, structured public engagement, and responsive customer service.

**CATEGORY 6 | Build the Team and Develop Skills,** supports the Vision by building the staff capacity needed to provide quality recreational opportunities and maintain recreational spaces that support healthy, active lifestyles, and operationalizes the Excellence and Respect values through training, professional development, organizational culture, and workforce planning.

**Together, the six categories advance the Mission's commitment to quality recreation, leisure opportunities, and stewardship of assets, natural resources, and open space; support the Vision of an enriched community with well-maintained recreational spaces and healthy, active lifestyles; and put the District's Values into daily practice.**


Strategic Categories & Purpose
1
Meet Present and Future Needs of the Community
Programs, services, access, and planning
2
Enhance Services and Facilities
Asset stewardship and capital investment
3
Improve Processes and Efficiencies
Governance, accreditation, and operations
4
Develop Collaborative Solutions
Partnerships and intergovernmental coordination
5
Enhance Community Engagement
Communication and customer service
6
Build the Team and Develop Skills
Workforce and organizational development

# District Overview

The Winnetka Park District serves residents of the Village of Winnetka and portions of the Villages of Northfield, Glencoe, and Kenilworth, on Chicago's North Shore along the western shore of Lake Michigan. The District operates within Cook County and the New Trier Township boundary, approximately 16 miles north of downtown Chicago. Winnetka is the largest of the four villages served by the District.

## Governance and Authority

The District is governed by a seven-member Board of Park Commissioners elected at-large to staggered four-year terms. The Board sets policy, approves the annual budget and tax levy, adopts ordinances, and provides strategic direction. Day-to-day operations are led by an Executive Director appointed by the Board. The District operates under the Illinois Park District Code (70 ILCS 1205) and is subject to the Illinois Open Meetings Act, the Illinois Freedom of Information Act, and applicable state and federal regulations.

## Park and Facility System

The District manages 26 parks and open spaces totaling 245.38 acres, plus a portfolio of recreation, lakefront, and enterprise facilities. The 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan provides a current inventory and condition assessment of these assets, and establishes the park classification framework on pages 144 through 149 that is incorporated by reference into this Plan. Park classifications used by the District include neighborhood parks, community parks, lakefront and special-use facilities, and natural areas, as defined in the CMP.

Major facility categories include the following:

- Skokie Playfield Campus, the District's primary administrative and indoor recreation hub, including the A.C. Nielsen Tennis Center, the Winnetka Ice Arena, platform tennis facilities, athletic fields, 18- and 9-hole golf course, and District administrative offices.
- Lakefront properties, including Centennial Beach, Elder Lane Beach, Maple Beach, Tower Road Beach, and Lloyd Beach, which provide swimming, non-motorized boating, pier and launch access, on-leash dog access at Centennial and shoreline open space.
- Neighborhood and community parks distributed across the CMP Planning Areas, providing playgrounds, athletic fields, courts, paths, and passive open space.
- Specialized program and natural area sites, including ecological restoration areas, natural drainage corridors, and amenity areas that support nature-based programming.

## Community Input and Public Engagement

The 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan was developed through a structured, multi-method public engagement process designed to capture both broad community sentiment and detailed stakeholder input. The District's understanding of community needs, priorities, and satisfaction reflected in this Plan derives directly from that process. Engagement components included:

- A statistically valid community-wide survey distributed to a randomly selected sample of households, designed and administered to meet conventional thresholds for statistical significance. Results from the statistically valid survey are weighted as the most representative measure of community-wide priorities and inform the District's understanding of resident demand, satisfaction, and unmet needs.
- An open community survey made available to all interested residents, providing additional volume of input from self-selected participants and supplementing, but not replacing, the statistically valid instrument.
- Stakeholder interviews with Board members, partner agencies, school districts, affiliate organizations, and other groups whose work intersects with District operations.
- Focus groups covering specific user populations, program areas, and topics including lakefront, programming, facilities, and underserved access.
- Public open houses and presentations conducted during the CMP development process to present findings and gather additional input.
- Coordination with elected officials and staff from the Villages of Winnetka, Northfield, Glencoe, and Kenilworth, and with regional partners.

## Ensuring Representative Community Input

The District recognizes that meaningful community input requires methodologies that capture voices across the full service area, not only those who self-select into engagement opportunities.

For this reason, the CMP is centered on a statistically valid community-wide survey distributed to a random sample of households. This methodology served as the District's primary tool for identifying community-wide priorities and unmet needs.

Through that analysis, Planning Area 2 was identified as having historically lower levels of access to and engagement in District programs and services. This finding now carries forward into CMP Focus Area #6, Goal 1.4, and Objective 1.4.1.

The 18 CMP Focus Areas reflect the priorities identified through this engagement. This Strategic Plan is structured to implement those community-driven priorities; it does not introduce parallel direction not grounded in CMP findings. Where staff working groups identified additional operational or organizational priorities during Plan development, those priorities were either mapped to existing CMP Focus Areas or added under categories (such as Build the Team) that support the broader CMP framework.

## Staff Input and Internal Engagement

Plan development drew on staff expertise from multiple levels of the organization and across all operating divisions. The process was designed to capture institutional knowledge from staff who plan, deliver, and maintain District programs and facilities daily. Components included:

- Cross-functional staff working groups brought together staff at multiple levels including the Executive Director, Department Directors, Superintendents, Managers, and frontline program and operations staff. Working groups produced an initial set of 122 proposed objectives reflecting departmental priorities, operational gaps, and CMP implementation needs.
- Multiple rounds of staff workshops in which working groups reviewed, consolidated, and refined the draft objectives. Workshops surfaced overlapping priorities across departments, eliminated duplication, and tested objectives for clarity, feasibility, and alignment with the CMP.
- A staff-wide Mission, Vision, and Values survey conducted to confirm direction on foundational language before final recommendations were brought to the Board.
- Senior leadership review of the consolidated draft prior to staff and Board presentation, ensuring cross-departmental alignment, financial feasibility, and consistency with policy direction.

## Comprehensive Master Plan Foundation

The 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan establishes 18 Focus Areas that frame the District's near- and long-term priorities. Each goal in this Strategic Plan is aligned to one or more of these Focus Areas to ensure the Plan implements community-driven direction rather than introducing parallel priorities. Park classifications, inventory, and condition ratings referenced throughout this Plan derive from the CMP, including the classification framework on pages 144 through 149. The 18 Focus Areas are:

1. Waterfront / Lakefront
2. Non-Vehicular Connectivity
3. In-Demand Amenities
4. Asset Replacement and Maintenance
5. Natural Areas and Environmental Stewardship
6. Underserved Access (Planning Area 2)
7. Park Development and Improvements Procedures
8. Skokie Playfield Campus
9. Pool Feasibility
10. ADA Transition Plan
11. Golf Facilities
12. Programming Space Needs
13. Program Administration
14. Programming Enhancements
15. Cost Recovery and Financial Projections
16. Operations, Workforce, and IT
17. Board Culture and Governance
18. Strategic Plan Integration

## Program and Service Inventory

The District provides a broad mix of recreation, athletic, lakefront, golf, ice, tennis, platform tennis, nature, and special event programming for residents of all ages and abilities. Programming is delivered through District staff, contracted instructors, and a network of affiliate organizations.

Current affiliate and partner organizations operating through or in coordination with the District include the Kenilworth Winnetka Baseball Association (KWBA), AYSO Region 425, Northshore Trevians Youth Football, Winnetka Hockey Club, Winnetka Platform Tennis Club, Skokie Valley Skating Club, New Trier Hockey Club, Hot Shots Sports, Haven Youth and Family Services, Oak Leaf Cooperative School (Forest Preschool), Chicago Loves Dance, and the Northern Suburban Special Recreation Association (NSSRA), among others. Affiliate relationships are governed under the District's affiliate group framework, which is being standardized under Strategic Plan Objective 3.1.3.


## Planning and Policy Anchors

This Plan operates in coordination with the District's other major planning instruments:

- The 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan establishes the 18 Focus Areas, the Facility Assessment, and the community needs framework that drives this Plan.
- The Skokie Playfield Campus Master Plan will establish site-specific direction for the District's primary administrative and indoor facility hub.
- The Waterfront 2030 Master Plan establishes long-term direction for lakefront access, ecological protection, and capital investment.
- The District's Policy Manual, currently being updated under Objective 3.4.3, establishes Board-level policy, with departmental Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) developed and maintained at the staff level.
- The Long-Range Capital Plan and annual operating and capital budgets translate Plan priorities into funded work.
- The ADA Transition Plan will advise staff of areas for accessibility improvements throughout the District with a phased approach for accomplishment and review of priority.

# Meeting Customer Needs

## Customer Profile

The District serves residents of the Village of Winnetka and portions of the Villages of Northfield, Glencoe, and Kenilworth, with a combined population of approximately 13,600 residents within District boundaries as of 2025. These North Shore communities consistently rank among the highest-income in Illinois, and the area has a strong civic culture grounded in expectations of high-quality public services, transparent governance, and disciplined fiscal stewardship. The District also serves non-resident participants through the resident/non-resident fee differential applied across pass programs, lakefront access, and program registration.

Typical District customers express one or more of the following: an interest in physical and mental wellness, an interest in lakefront and natural environments, a need for non-school-hour and summer programming for children and youth, a need for adult and senior recreation, and a high expectation of facility quality, cleanliness, and customer service. Affordability and value are also expected by residents who fund the District through property taxes.

## Products and Services

The District delivers products and services across the following categories:

- Maintenance and stewardship of parks, athletic fields, lakefront, natural areas, paths, and shared open space.
- Recreation, enrichment, athletic, nature, and special-needs programming for youth, adults, seniors, and families, delivered by District staff, contractual instructors, affiliates, and partner organizations.
- Lakefront operations, including beach access, pier and non-motorized boat launch, daily and seasonal pass programs, and lakefront safety operations.
- Golf operations at the Winnetka Golf Club, including 18-hole and 9-hole play, leagues, lessons, junior programming, food and beverage, and clubhouse services delivered through the management contract.
- Ice operations at the Winnetka Ice Arena, including public skating, hockey programming, figure skating, instructional programs, and rentals.
- Tennis, pickleball, and platform tennis operations at the A.C. Nielsen Tennis Center and Skokie Playfield platform tennis facility, including memberships, leagues, lessons, and tournaments.
- Special events and community programming.
- Permitting, rentals, and shared-use of fields and facilities for affiliates and community partners.
- Capital project planning, development, and delivery, including coordination with the Village of Winnetka and other partners on shared infrastructure.
- Stewardship of natural areas, ecological restoration, and environmental education.

## Change Dynamics

The District's understanding of community needs, priorities, and satisfaction is informed by the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP), including the statistically valid community-wide survey conducted as part of that planning process. Customer profile, demand patterns, and satisfaction benchmarks referenced in this Plan derive from that survey and from supporting CMP engagement components. The District maintains a current inventory of parks, facilities, and amenities through the asset management practices being strengthened under Objective 2.1.1, and updates the inventory in coordination with the CMP review cycle established under Board Policy 5.01. Programming inventory is reviewed and updated continuously through the registration system, season-over-season participation analysis, waitlist tracking, and partnership coordination. Programming changes are driven by the CMP findings, ongoing participant feedback, market research, demographic shifts, and the program evaluation framework being implemented under Objective 3.1.2.

Demographic trends affecting District programming include an aging population, sustained demand for high-quality youth athletic and enrichment programming, growing interest in adult and senior wellness offerings, and expectations for lakefront and natural-area access driven by the character of the communities served and the District's position as the largest open space landowner within its boundaries. The District also operates within a regulatory environment shaped by Illinois open meetings, public records, accessibility, and procurement requirements, and it coordinates closely with the Village of Winnetka and neighboring municipalities on zoning, lakefront protection, stormwater, and shared infrastructure.


# Goals and Objectives

**This section presents the District's six strategic categories, 22 goals, and 67 objectives. Each objective is identified by a numerical reference, a short title, an implementation timeframe, a description, and the CMP Focus Area or Areas to which it is aligned.**

Implementation timeframes are defined as follows:

Short-Term: Up to 18 months.

Mid-Term: 18 months to 3 years.

Long-Term: 3 to 5 years.

Ongoing: A continuous, recurring activity throughout the Plan period.

# CATEGORY 1

MEET PRESENT & FUTURE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

**This category ensures programs, services, and facilities evolve with community demographics, expressed demand, and long-term planning priorities. It integrates CMP Focus Areas #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #10, #12, #13, #14, #15, #18.**

## CATEGORY 1 | Goal 1.1

### GOAL 1.1 – Deliver High-Quality, Relevant Programming That Reflects Community Needs

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #3 (In-Demand Amenities), #12 (Programming Space Needs), #13 (Program Administration), #14 (Programming Enhancements)**

#### 1.1.1 – Expand program offerings in priority growth areas, including through partnerships

**Short-Term** Increase program relevance by evaluating and introducing offerings for users in areas identified as high-demand (e.g., wellness, enrichment, adult recreation). Establish partnerships (community providers, professional instructors) to activate daytime or non-traditional program windows using existing or shared spaces. **(CMP Focus Areas #3, #12, #13, #14)**

#### 1.1.2 – Optimize program capacity and reduce waitlists through space-neutral strategies

**Mid-Term** Improve access and reduce waitlists by applying staggered scheduling, ratio optimization, additional sections, flexible or outdoor programming, and partnership-based temporary space. **(CMP Focus Areas #12, #13, #14)**

## GOAL 1.2– Improve Access to Program Space Across the District

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #2 (Non-Vehicular Connectivity), #6 (Underserved Access), #7 (Park Development Procedures), #3 (In-Demand Amenities), #6 (Underserved Access), #7 (Park Development and Improvement Procedures), #12 (Programming Space Needs), #13 (Program Administration), #14 (Programming Enhancements)**

### 1.2.1 – Optimize use of existing program space through scheduling and operational improvements

**Short-Term** Utilize findings from the CMP Facility Assessment and evaluate current use of indoor and outdoor spaces to implement scheduling, staffing, and operational adjustments that increase available program capacity and improve efficiency. **(CMP Focus Areas #12, #13, #14)**

### 1.2.2 – Convert underutilized spaces into multi-use program areas

**Mid-Term** Reconfigure or repurpose underutilized indoor or outdoor locations to support multi-age or multi-purpose programming (e.g., enrichment, adult fitness, STEM, arts). **(CMP Focus Areas #3, #12, #14)**

### 1.2.3 – Develop an equitable space allocation process with ongoing monitoring

**Mid-Term** Create and implement a standardized space allocation process for internal programs, partner groups, and affiliates that prioritizes equitable access, demonstrated demand, efficiency, and alignment with the CMP. Evaluate program space needs on a recurring basis and adjust as needed. **(CMP Focus Areas #6, #12, #13, #14)**

# CATEGORY 1 | Goal 1.3

## GOAL 1.3 – Advance Master Planning, Feasibility Studies, and Long-Term Capital Priorities

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #1 (Beachfront Parks), #3 (In-Demand Amenities), #4 (Asset Replacement and Maintenance), #5 (Park Aesthetics and Natural Areas), #6 (Underserved Access), #7 (Park Development and Improvement Procedures), #8 (Skokie Playfield Campus), #9 (Pool Feasibility), #10 (ADA Transition Plan), #12 (Programming Space Needs), #15 (Cost Recovery and Financial Projections), #18 (Strategic Plan Integration)**

### 1.3.1 – Develop and begin implementation of the Skokie Playfield Campus Master Plan

**Short-Term** Develop a comprehensive, site-specific master plan that addresses future facility development, circulation, field use, public access, administrative office needs, indoor program spaces, traffic flow, parking, tennis gallery redesign, food service concepts, restroom expansions, and long-term programming capacity. **(CMP Focus Areas #7, #8, #12, #18)**

### 1.3.2 – Initiate a feasibility study for a potential new pool facility

Mid-Term Launch a study that evaluates indoor vs. outdoor options, programming needs, potential locations, revenue impacts, partnership opportunities, and capital funding strategies. **(CMP Focus Areas #3, #9, #12, #15, #18)**

### 1.3.3 – Update the District's ADA Transition Plan for full regulatory compliance

**Short-Term** Engage a qualified consultant to update the ADA Transition Plan based on current accessibility codes and the Facility Assessment Report, identifying needed improvements and timelines for physical accessibility. Coordinate with the digital accessibility work under Objective 5.1.2 to ensure both physical and digital compliance are addressed within the District's broader ADA framework. **(CMP Focus Areas #4, #10)**

### 1.3.4 – Develop a capital improvement prioritization framework using CMP guidance

**Mid-Term** Create a decision-making tool that prioritizes capital investments using criteria such as community benefit, safety, asset condition, cost recovery, operational impact, total cost, sustainability, equity, and alignment with long-term plans, and secure formal Board adoption during the budget process to support consistent application in capital decision-making. **(CMP Focus Areas #4, #5, #6, #7, #15, #18)**

### 1.3.5 – Identify long-term land acquisition opportunities to meet future needs

Long-Term Pursue opportunities for land acquisition, focusing on recreation needs, open space expansion, underserved areas, and strategic opportunities. **(CMP Focus Areas #5, #6, #7, #18)**

### 1.3.6 – Maintain alignment across District planning efforts and capital priorities

Ongoing Ensure consistency and coordination between the CMP, Strategic Plan, Long Range Plan, and other major initiatives such as the Waterfront 2030 Master Plan to support informed decision-making and resource allocation. **(CMP Focus Areas #1, #7, #15, #18)**

## GOAL 1.4 – Improve Access, Equity, and Connectivity Across the Park System

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #1 (Beachfront Parks), #2 (Non-Vehicular Connectivity), #3 (In-Demand Amenities), #5 (Park Aesthetics and Natural Areas), #6 (Underserved Access), #7 (Park Development and Improvement Procedures), #10 (ADA Transition Plan), #13 (Program Administration), #14 (Programming Enhancements), #18 (Strategic Plan Integration)**

### 1.4.1 – Improve access to and engagement in parks, programs, and services in underserved areas

**Mid-Term** Address barriers to participation and access for Planning Area 2 as noted in the CMP and implement targeted outreach, partnerships, and service adjustments. **(CMP Focus Areas #3, #6, #7, #13, #14, #18)**

### 1.4.2 – Plan for connectivity improvements within, between, and along parks, facilities, and community assets

**Long-Term** Review existing pedestrian and bicycle connections and identify opportunities to enhance pedestrian, bicycle, and ADA-accessible connections to improve access and integration. **(CMP Focus Areas #1, #2, #5, #10)**

### 1.4.3 – Improve park wayfinding, signage, and access information

**Mid-Term** Create a unified wayfinding strategy for park entrances, lakefront access points, trailheads, indoor facilities, and special amenities. Update maps, digital navigation tools, trail signage, and facility directional signage. **(CMP Focus Areas #1, #2, #5)**

# CATEGORY 2

ENHANCE SERVICES & FACILITIES

**This category strengthens the quality, condition, and sustainability of parks, amenities, and infrastructure across the District. It incorporates CMP Focus Areas #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #7, #8, #10, #11, #12, #13, #14, #15, #16, #18.**

## CATEGORY 2 | Goal 2.1

## GOAL 2.1 – Replace, Renovate, and Maintain Assets to Ensure Long-Term Quality and Safety

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #2 (Non-Vehicular Connectivity), #3 (In-Demand Amenities), #4 (Asset Replacement and Maintenance), #5 (Park Aesthetics and Natural Areas), #7 (Park Development and Improvement Procedures), #8 (Skokie Playfield Campus), #10 (ADA Transition Plan), #12 (Programming Space Needs)**

### 2.1.1 – Enhance and maintain a districtwide asset management and condition tracking system

**Short-Term** Utilize and strengthen the District's existing asset management platform to ensure complete, consistent, and accurate tracking of asset conditions across all facilities and infrastructure, and implement standardized inspection, rating, and prioritization practices to support capital planning and maintenance decision-making. **(CMP Focus Areas #4, #7, #10)**

### 2.1.2 – Develop a multi-year preventive maintenance schedule

**Short-Term** Create a District-wide preventive maintenance calendar detailing recurring tasks, seasonal responsibilities, and required certifications for each asset category. **(CMP Focus Areas #4, #5)**

### 2.1.3 – Prioritize ADA-related improvements identified in the updated ADA Transition Plan

**Mid-Term** Address priority deficiencies identified in the ADA Transition Plan update, focusing first on high-impact and regulatory requirements. **(CMP Focus Areas #2, #4, #10)**

### 2.1.4 –Advance repair and renovation planning for Ice, Tennis, and Platform Tennis facilities

**Mid-Term** Use the Skokie Playfield Campus Master Plan to inform ice arena improvements (including refrigeration and mechanical system upgrades), tennis gallery reconfiguration, tennis facility HVAC and mechanical needs, and platform tennis enhancements. **(CMP Focus Areas #4, #8, #12)**

### 2.1.5 – Address critical capital replacement needs highlighted in the CMP and Facility Assessment Report

**Long-Term** Replace or renovate assets at end-of-life, such as aging playgrounds, deteriorated pathways, roofs, irrigation systems, and mechanical equipment. **(CMP Focus Areas #2, #3, #4, #5, #7)**

## GOAL 2.2 – Enhance Park Aesthetics, Natural Areas, and Environmental Stewardship

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #1 (Beachfront Parks), #3 (In-Demand Amenities), #5 (Park Aesthetics and Natural Areas), #7 (Park Development and Improvement Procedures), #18 (Strategic Plan Integration)**

### 2.2.1 – Develop or update park site master plans for priority sites

**Mid-Term** Create or refresh park site master plans for selected parks to reflect current site conditions, usage patterns, special use considerations, and updated survey information. Additionally, to address opportunities for aesthetic, ecological, and functional improvements that inform future capital investment and phased implementation. **(CMP Focus Areas #3, #5, #7)**

### 2.2.2 – Expand ecological restoration, native planting, and lakefront ecology

**Mid-Term** Increase native species usage, restore degraded areas, expand naturalized plantings across the District, and implement lakefront ecological improvements including habitat restoration and erosion-resistant features. **(CMP Focus Areas #1, #5, #7, #18)**

### 2.2.3 – Improve park aesthetics through phased amenity and landscape upgrades

**Mid-Term** Advance aesthetic and user-experience enhancements based on adopted Park Site or Area Master plans, or consistent community feedback through surveys or other public input methods, and align implementation with the annual operating and capital budget processes to support consistent and strategic investment in park quality and community experience. **(CMP Focus Areas #3, #5, #7)**

### 2.2.4 – Develop and implement a District-wide Sustainability Plan and strengthen environmental stewardship practices

**Mid-Term** Create and adopt a comprehensive Sustainability Plan that establishes goals, policies, and measurable actions related to energy efficiency, resource management, protection and stewardship of natural areas, ecological health, and sustainable operational practices. **(CMP Focus Areas #5, #7, #18)**

## CATEGORY 2 | Goal 2.3

## GOAL 2.3 – Improve Safety, Infrastructure Reliability, and Facility User Experience

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #2 (Non-Vehicular Connectivity), #4 (Asset Replacement and Maintenance), #8 (Skokie Playfield Campus), #10 (ADA Transition Plan), #11 (Golf Facilities), #13 (Program Administration), #14 (Programming Enhancements), #15 (Cost Recovery and Financial Projections), #16 (Operations, Workforce, and IT)**

### 2.3.1 – Improve infrastructure reliability and facility user experience at major facilities

**Short-Term** Address immediate HVAC, mechanical, plumbing, safety, and IT issues to ensure operational continuity. Improve signage, lighting, cleanliness, accessibility, comfort amenities, and overall atmosphere to enhance community experience. **(CMP Focus Areas #2, #4, #8, #10, #16)**

### 2.3.2 – Evaluate Golf Club performance and future operational needs

**Mid-Term** Support the Golf Services Advisory Board in evaluating the Golf Club's programmatic demand, operational performance, and user experience, and review the management agreement structure including incentive fee methodology and contract term provisions in coordination with legal counsel, to identify opportunities for improvement, potential adjustments, and long-term planning considerations. **(CMP Focus Areas #11, #13, #14, #15)**

# CATEGORY 3

IMPROVE PROCESSES & EFFICIENCIES

**This category strengthens internal systems, administrative processes, financial decision-making, and organizational effectiveness across the District. It aligns with CMP Focus Areas #6, #10, #12, #13, #14, #15, #16, #17, #18.**

## CATEGORY 3 | Goal 3.1

### GOAL 3.1 – Strengthen Program Administration, Evaluation, and Registration Processes

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #10 (ADA Transition Plan), #12 (Programming Space Needs), #13 (Program Administration), #14 (Programming Enhancements), #15 (Cost Recovery and Financial Projections), #16 (Operations, Workforce, and IT)**

#### 3.1.1 – Evaluate and improve the District's registration system and platform strategy

**Short-Term** Assess the effectiveness of the current registration and determine whether enhancements to the existing platform or transition to a new solution are needed to improve user experience, accessibility, and operational efficiency for both customers and staff. **(CMP Focus Areas #10, #13, #16)**

#### 3.1.2 – Implement a comprehensive program evaluation and data-driven decision framework

**Mid-Term** Standardize evaluation across all programs (enrollment, satisfaction, cost recovery, instructor performance). Use registration trends, waitlists, cancellations, and demographics to guide decisions. Adjust scheduling, staffing, and offerings based on performance data. Redesign or retire underperforming programs and expand those exceeding demand thresholds. (**CMP Focus Areas #13, #14, #15, #16)**

#### 3.1.3 – Implement the affiliate group framework and standardize affiliate data collection

Ongoing Apply the adopted affiliate group framework consistently across all affiliate and user group relationships, including field and facility allocation, financial contributions, communications protocols, and performance expectations. Implement a standardized process for collecting participation, residency, and usage data from all affiliates to improve decision-making and programming alignment. Conduct annual evaluations of affiliate performance against framework standards. **(CMP Focus Areas #12, #13, #14, #15)**

## GOAL 3.2 – Strengthen Financial Management, Cost Recovery Practices, and Resource Efficiency

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #6 (Underserved Access), #13 (Program Administration), #15 (Cost Recovery and Financial Projections), #18 (Strategic Plan Integration)**

### 3.2.1 – Update fee structure and the cost recovery framework

Short Term Define cost recovery tiers by program type and community benefit. Review and modernize the methodology for calculating both direct and indirect costs, including administrative, parks, and shared service allocations. Align fees, pricing strategies, and cost recovery targets across all program categories and enterprise operations. (**CMP Focus Areas #15, #18)**

### 3.2.2 – Strengthen financial decision-making through standardized cost modeling and contract evaluation

**Mid-Term** Implement consistent financial modeling tools (e.g., pro forma or equivalent) to evaluate direct and indirect costs, pricing scenarios, and long-term sustainability of programs and services. Review and update contractual agreements (including 70/30 structures and partnerships) to ensure alignment with cost recovery goals, administrative effort, and market conditions. **(CMP Focus Areas #13, #15)**

### 3.2.3 – Maintain long-term financial sustainability through reserve planning, trend monitoring, and policy alignment

Long-Term Conduct regular reviews of reserve levels, participation trends, pricing strategies, and cost drivers to support operational stability and long-term capital planning. Align financial policies with sustainability goals and community access considerations to ensure balanced decision-making. **(CMP Focus Areas #6, #15, #18)**

# CATEGORY 3 | Goal 3.3

## GOAL 3.3 – Enhance Internal Operations, IT Systems, and Organizational Efficiency

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #13 (Program Administration), #15 (Cost Recovery and Financial Projections), #16 (Operations, Workforce, and IT), #17 (Board Culture and Governance), #18 (Strategic Plan Integration)**

### 3.3.1 – Reevaluate and strengthen IT support and service delivery District-wide

**Short-Term** Assess current IT support structures, including internal staffing and contracted services, to identify gaps in service levels, system reliability, response time, and support capacity. **(CMP Focus Area #16)**

### 3.3.2 – Standardize internal administrative procedures and operational practices

**Mid-Term** Develop and implement standard operating procedures (SOPs) for key operational functions, including registration, customer service, program setup, fee adjustments, refunds, and internal communications. **(CMP Focus Areas #13, #15, #16)**

### 3.3.3 – Integrate the Strategic Plan into annual operations, performance management, and accountability reporting

**Ongoing** Align departmental work plans, budget development, staff performance evaluations, and individual goal-setting with Strategic Plan priorities to ensure consistent implementation and accountability. Develop and maintain performance measurement tools and key performance indicators (KPIs) to objectively measure progress, evaluate results, and report implementation outcomes to the Board and community. (**CMP Focus Area #15, #16, #17, #18)**

### 3.3.4 – Modernize data systems, enterprise platforms, and system integration

**Mid-Term** Enhance data collection, reporting, and analytics capabilities. Improve system integration between registration, financial, HR, and operational platforms. Assess enterprise systems (HRIS, applicant tracking, financial systems) for workflow efficiency and long-term sustainability. **(CMP Focus Areas #13, #15, #16, #18)**

### 3.3.5 – Strengthen and maintain cybersecurity, system lifecycle, and digital risk management practices

Ongoing Continuously improve system security, access controls, data protection, backup procedures, and lifecycle planning to ensure reliable, secure, and resilient operations. **(CMP Focus Areas #13, #16, #18)**

## GOAL 3.4 – Strengthen Governance, Accreditation, and Organizational Infrastructure

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #16 (Operations, Workforce, and IT), #17 (Board Culture and Governance), #18 (Strategic Plan Integration)**

### 3.4.1 – Achieve and maintain CAPRA and Illinois Distinguished Accreditation

**Mid-Term** Complete accreditation self-assessments, align District policies and procedures with national and state standards, and integrate accreditation requirements into ongoing operations and reporting. **(CMP Focus Area #16, #17, #18)**

### 3.4.2 – Implement updated records retention practices and advance digitization District records

**Mid-Term** Implement the Records Retention Schedule in accordance with state requirements and establish consistent practices for records management across the District, while advancing a phased digitization strategy for administrative, legal, and operational records. **(CMP Focus Areas #16, #17, #18)**

### 3.4.3 – Complete Policy Manual update, clarify governance structure, and establish a recurring review cycle

**Short-Term** Conduct a comprehensive review and update of the District's Policy Manual, establish a clear distinction between Board-adopted policies and staff-level operational procedures, align departmental SOPs with the updated Policy Manual and accreditation standards, and implement a structured biennial review process. **(CMP Focus Areas #16, #17, #18)**

# CATEGORY 4

DEVELOP COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS

**This category strengthens partnerships, intergovernmental relationships, and collaborative planning efforts so the District can advance major initiatives efficiently and transparently. Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #1, #3, #5, #6, #7, #8, #12, #13, #14, #15, #17, #18.**

## CATEGORY 4 | Goal 4.1

### GOAL 4.1 – Strengthen Strategic Coordination With the Village of Winnetka

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #1 (Beachfront Parks), #5 (Park Aesthetics and Natural Areas), #7 (Park Development and Improvement Procedures), #8 (Skokie Playfield Campus), #18 (Strategic Plan Integration)**

#### 4.1.1 – Align District capital planning with Village regulatory, zoning, and infrastructure processes

**Short-Term** Coordinate with Village staff to review zoning compliance, potential zoning district modifications, stormwater regulations, easements, utility impacts, and land-use considerations for District capital projects, including all facility renovation and expansion work. **(CMP Focus Areas #7, #18)**

#### 4.1.2 – Collaborate with the Village on lakefront safety, infrastructure, and environmental management

**Mid-Term** Partner with Village departments on shoreline stabilization, debris management, safety improvements, and ecological protection. **(CMP Focus Areas #1, #5, #7)**

#### 4.1.3 – Coordinate long-term planning for Skokie Playfield Campus

Long-Term Building on findings from the Skokie Playfield Campus Master Plan, work jointly with the Village on traffic, access, zoning compatibility, and infrastructure considerations related to Skokie Playfield Campus planning. **(CMP Focus Areas #7, #8, #18)**

#### 4.1.4 – Establish structured intergovernmental coordination, communication, and planning processes

**Short-Term** Formalize regular coordination, annual planning alignment, standardized review procedures, and project communication protocols with Village staff to ensure consistent communication, efficient project review, documented decision tracking for high-impact initiatives, and alignment on long-term priorities. (**CMP Focus Areas #1, #7, #18)**

# CATEGORY 4 | Goal 4.2

## GOAL 4.2 – Strengthen Partnership With Winnetka Public School District #36

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #6 (Underserved Access), #12 (Programming Space Needs), #13 (Program Administration), #14 (Programming Enhancements)**

### 4.2.1 – Expand shared-use of school facilities to increase program capacity

**Short-Term** Work with District 36 to develop and implement shared-use agreements that increase access to gymnasiums, multipurpose spaces, and other facilities. **(CMP Focus Areas #6, #12, #13, #14)**

### 4.2.2 – Strengthen operational coordination for shared programming

**Mid-Term** Improve scheduling, communication, and program delivery coordination to reduce conflicts and improve efficiency across District and school programming. **(CMP Focus Areas #12, #13, #14)**

### 4.2.3 – Maintain structured partnership evaluation and coordination

Ongoing Conduct regular coordination meetings to review partnership performance, facility use, and evolving community needs. **(CMP Focus Areas #12, #13, #14)**

## GOAL 4.3 – Expand Strategic Partnerships to Increase Capacity, Innovation, and Cost Efficiency

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #3 (In-Demand Amenities), #5 (Park Aesthetics and Natural Areas), #6 (Underserved Access), #12 (Programming Space Needs), #13 (Program Administration), #14 (Programming Enhancements), #15 (Cost Recovery and Financial Projections)**

### 4.3.1 – Expand partnerships to increase program space capacity and regional coordination

**Mid Term** Develop shared-use agreements and documented memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with community organizations and other governmental entities (New Trier Township School District #203, Library District, Community House, New Trier Township, private fitness/studio spaces, faith-based facilities) and strengthen coordination with regional providers to expand access to recreation space and align programming strategies. Agreements should include clear expectations, resource sharing provisions, and evaluation measures. **(CMP Focus Areas #6, #12, #13, #14, #15)**

### 4.3.2 – Develop partnerships to enhance program delivery and community engagement

**Mid-Term** Partner with community organizations, nonprofits, private providers, and regional agencies to expand specialized programming (including nature-based programs, habitat restoration volunteer opportunities, and ecology education), community engagement opportunities, and service delivery capacity. Pursue joint contracting opportunities to reduce costs. **(CMP Focus Areas #3, #5, #12, #13, #14, #15)**

## GOAL 4.4 – Support Effective Governance Through Clear Communication, Structure, and Resources

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #17 (Board Culture and Governance), #18 (Strategic Plan Integration)**

### 4.4.1 – Maintain and support governance policies and practices that guide Board operations

**Short-Term** Support the review, update, and consistent application of Board policies related to ethics, governance practices, and operational expectations. Coordinate access to training and facilitation resources that support effective governance. **(CMP Focus Areas Areas #17, #18)**

### 4.4.2 – Facilitate structured communication and alignment between Board and staff

**Mid-Term** Provide regular opportunities for information sharing, discussion, and alignment on strategic priorities, major initiatives, and emerging issues. **(CMP Focus Areas #17, #18)**

# CATEGORY 5

ENHANCE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**This category improves communications, outreach, public transparency, customer experience, and the District's relationship with the community. Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #1, #3, #5, #7, #8, #9, #10, #11, #12, #13, #14, #15, #16, #17, #18.**

## CATEGORY 5 | Goal 5.1

## GOAL 5.1 – Strengthen Public Communication and Engagement to Increase Awareness, Understanding, and Participation

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #1 (Beachfront Parks), #3 (In-Demand Amenities), #5 (Park Aesthetics and Natural Areas), #7 (Park Development and Improvement Procedures), #8 (Skokie Playfield Campus), #9 (Pool Feasibility), #10 (ADA Transition Plan), #12 (Programming Space Needs), #13 (Program Administration), #14 (Programming Enhancements), #16 (Operations, Workforce, and IT), #17 (Board Culture and Governance), #18 (Strategic Plan Integration)**

### 5.1.1 – Develop a comprehensive District-wide Marketing, Communications, and Community Engagement Plan

**Short-Term** Establish a coordinated framework for external marketing, public information, internal communications, community engagement, public education, and crisis communication that aligns with District policies and supports consistent, transparent, and effective communication with the community, staff, and stakeholders. **(CMP Focus Areas #16, #18)**

### 5.1.2 – Maintain and improve clarity and accessibility of program information and digital content

**Mid-Term** Enhance digital and print materials, website functionality, and program descriptions to ensure information is clear, accessible, and easy for users to navigate and understand. Achieve and maintain Title II ADA digital accessibility compliance, including alignment with WCAG 2.1 Level AA standards for the District's website, mobile applications, registration system, and digital content, in advance of the April 26, 2028 federal compliance deadline. **(CMP Focus Areas #10, #13, #14, #16)**

### 5.1.3 – Expand community feedback and structured input processes

**Mid-Term** Introduce structured feedback channels (QR codes at facilities, seasonal focus groups, comment dashboards) and use surveys, open houses, stakeholder interviews, and workshops to gather community input during major planning initiatives. (**CMP Focus Areas #1, #3, #8, #9, #14, #18)**

### 5.1.4 – Expand and enhance transparency and public understanding of the District's operations and decision-making

**Mid-Term** Expand and enhance communication efforts that improve transparency and public access to information, including annual reporting, FOIA-related information, budget education, and resources that help the community better understand District operations, governance, and services. **(CMP Focus Areas #1, #3, #7, #14, #17, #18)**

### 5.1.5 – Strengthen communications during lakefront and storm-related conditions

Ongoing Establish and maintain a documented joint communication protocol with Village partners for clear, timely updates on debris, flooding, closures, safety alerts, and lakefront conditions, including standardized decision-making criteria and notification channels. **(CMP Focus Areas #1, #5, #7)**

## CATEGORY 5 | Goal 5.2

## GOAL 5.2 – Build Trust Through Meaningful Engagement and Responsive Service Delivery

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #3 (In-Demand Amenities), #12 (Programming Space Needs), #13 (Program Administration), #14 (Programming Enhancements), #16 (Operations, Workforce, and IT)**

### 5.2.1 – Enhance customer experience across all District interactions

**Mid-Term** Improve service delivery, communication, responsiveness, and customer support across programs, facilities, and digital platforms, and establish consistent methods for tracking and analyzing customer inquiries to inform service improvements and communication strategies. **(CMP Focus Areas #3, #13, #14, #16)**

# CATEGORY 6

BUILD THE TEAM / DEVELOP SKILLS

**This category strengthens staff capacity, organizational culture, internal communication, safety, professional development, recruitment, retention, and long-term workforce stability. Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #8, #9, #11, #12, #15, #16, #17, #18.**

## CATEGORY 6 | Goal 6.1

### GOAL 6.1 – Strengthen Staff Capacity, Training, and Professional Development Across the District

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #16 (Operations, Workforce, and IT), #18 (Strategic Plan Integration)**

#### 6.1.1 – Develop and maintain a District-wide staff training and development framework

Ongoing Create a standardized training program outlining required onboarding, annual safety certifications, customer service expectations, and technical/leadership development opportunities. Assess regulatory requirements, operational needs, and staff feedback annually to update training offerings. **(CMP Focus Areas #16, #18)**

#### 6.1.2 – Expand training access, specialized instruction, and professional certification across all staff levels

**Short-Term** Offer training modules for part-time and seasonal staff (customer service, safety, emergency response, inclusion). Provide advanced training or certification pathways for specialized program areas including participation in professional associations, conferences, and continuing education. Support CPRP, CPRE, AFO, CPSI or other relevant certification attainment through exam preparation, reimbursements, and career pathways. **(CMP Focus Areas #16, #18)**

#### 6.1.3 – Increase opportunities for staff leadership development

**Mid-Term** Provide leadership development opportunities through training, mentoring, and professional growth pathways to strengthen skills, engagement, and career development across the organization. (**CMP Focus Areas #16)**

# CATEGORY 6 | Goal 6.2

## GOAL 6.2 – Strengthen Organizational Culture, Internal Communication, and Collaboration

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #16 (Operations, Workforce, and IT), #18 (Strategic Plan Integration)**

### 6.2.1 – Improve internal communication and cross-department collaboration

Ongoing Establish consistent communication tools and protocols for staff updates, policy reminders, project notifications, and cross-department coordination. Implement structured collaboration opportunities (task forces, committees, cross-department project teams). Reinforce a culture of recognition and accountability through consistent follow-up on expectations. **(CMP Focus Areas #16, #18)**

## CATEGORY 6 | Goal 6.3

## GOAL 6.3 – Strengthen Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention Practices

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #15 (Cost Recovery and Financial Projections), #16 (Operations, Workforce, and IT)**

### 6.3.1 – Expand recruitment pipelines for specialized and seasonal roles

**Short-Term** Partner with universities, workforce organizations, training academies, and professional associations to broaden applicant pools for hard-to-fill positions. **(CMP Focus Areas #16)**

### 6.3.2 – Standardize and strengthen hiring and onboarding practices through accessible tools and shared guidance for managers

**Mid-Term** Refine and implement a consistent set of hiring resources, templates, and guidance for supervisors and managers, and ensure practices are regularly communicated and reinforced across departments to support effective and equitable recruitment, hiring, and onboarding processes. This includes tools such as standardized interview questions, skill assessments, onboarding checklists, and clear probationary period expectations. **(CMP Focus Areas #16)**

### 6.3.3 – Develop retention strategies and monitor compensation competitiveness

**Mid-Term** Implement retention tools such as recognition programs, advancement pathways where applicable, flexible scheduling, and seasonal return incentives. Review compensation benchmarks, labor market trends, and regional comparisons on a recurring basis. **(CMP Focus Areas #15, #16)**

# CATEGORY 6 | Goal 6.4

## GOAL 6.4 – Strengthen Safety, Preparedness, and Risk Management

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #16 (Operations, Workforce, and IT), #18 (Strategic Plan Integration)**

### 6.4.1 – Expand safety training frequency and maintain compliance

**Short-Term** Increase mandatory safety training (CPR/AED, first aid, emergency procedures, hazard communication) for full-time and seasonal staff. **(CMP Focus Areas #16)**

### 6.4.2 – Strengthen safety and risk management practices

**Mid-Term** Enhance and standardize safety protocols, training, and documentation to ensure alignment with PDRMA requirements, goals, and best practices, and support consistent implementation of risk management procedures across all departments. **(CMP Focus Areas #16, #18)**

# CATEGORY 6 | Goal 6.5

## GOAL 6.5 – Support Long-Term Workforce Planning and Organizational Stability

**Aligned to CMP Focus Areas #8 (Skokie Playfield Campus), #9 (Pool Feasibility), #11 (Golf Facilities), #12 (Programming Space Needs), #16 (Operations, Workforce, and IT), #18 (Strategic Plan Integration)**

### 6.5.1 – Strengthen workforce continuity, staff readiness and organizational resilience

**Mid-Term** Update and expand existing chain-of-authority procedures to clearly define leadership responsibility during planned or unplanned absences, and implement cross-training, development opportunities, and staffing evaluations to support continuity of operations, provide redundancy in mission-critical functions, and enhance staff support, retention, and long-term organizational stability. **(CMP Focus Areas #16, #18)**

### 6.5.2 – Align staffing and organizational structure with long-term facility and program expansion

**Ongoing** Use outcomes from the Skokie Playfield Campus Master Plan, pool feasibility study, golf facility assessment, and other master planning efforts to identify future staffing needs. Review reporting structures, spans of control, and departmental workflows annually. **(CMP Focus Areas #8, #9, #11,#12, #16, #18)**


SuperElite

# Managing Financial Resources

## Business Climate and Market

The communities served by the District, the Village of Winnetka and portions of Northfield, Glencoe, and Kenilworth, together represent a North Shore service area of approximately 13,600 residents as of 2025 within District boundaries, characterized by stable property values, a high-income tax base, a strong civic culture, and proximity to Lake Michigan. The District operates as one of multiple taxing bodies serving this area, including Winnetka Public School District #36, New Trier Township High School District 203, the four municipal governments including the Villages of Winnetka, Kenilworth, Northfield, and Glencoe, the Cook County Forest Preserve District, and the Winnetka Northfield Library District. The Park District represents a relatively small share of the typical property tax bill while providing the majority of the area's parks, lakefront, and public recreation services.

Residents and visitors hold high expectations for the quality and cleanliness of the District's facilities, the responsiveness of its customer service, and the value delivered relative to fees and taxes. The District competes for participation against private clubs, regional agencies, schools, and other recreation providers in the North Shore market.

## Change Dynamics

Several dynamics shape the District's financial outlook over the Plan period. The 2025 CMP has identified significant capital priorities, including ice arena improvements, tennis facility reconfiguration, platform tennis enhancements, and broader development including pool facilities. The Waterfront 2030 Master Plan establishes a long-term framework for lakefront capital and stewardship investment. The ADA Transition Plan update will identify additional regulatory-driven capital priorities. Together, these planning efforts are expected to drive elevated capital investment over the Plan period, balanced against the District's commitment to long-term financial sustainability and reserve discipline.

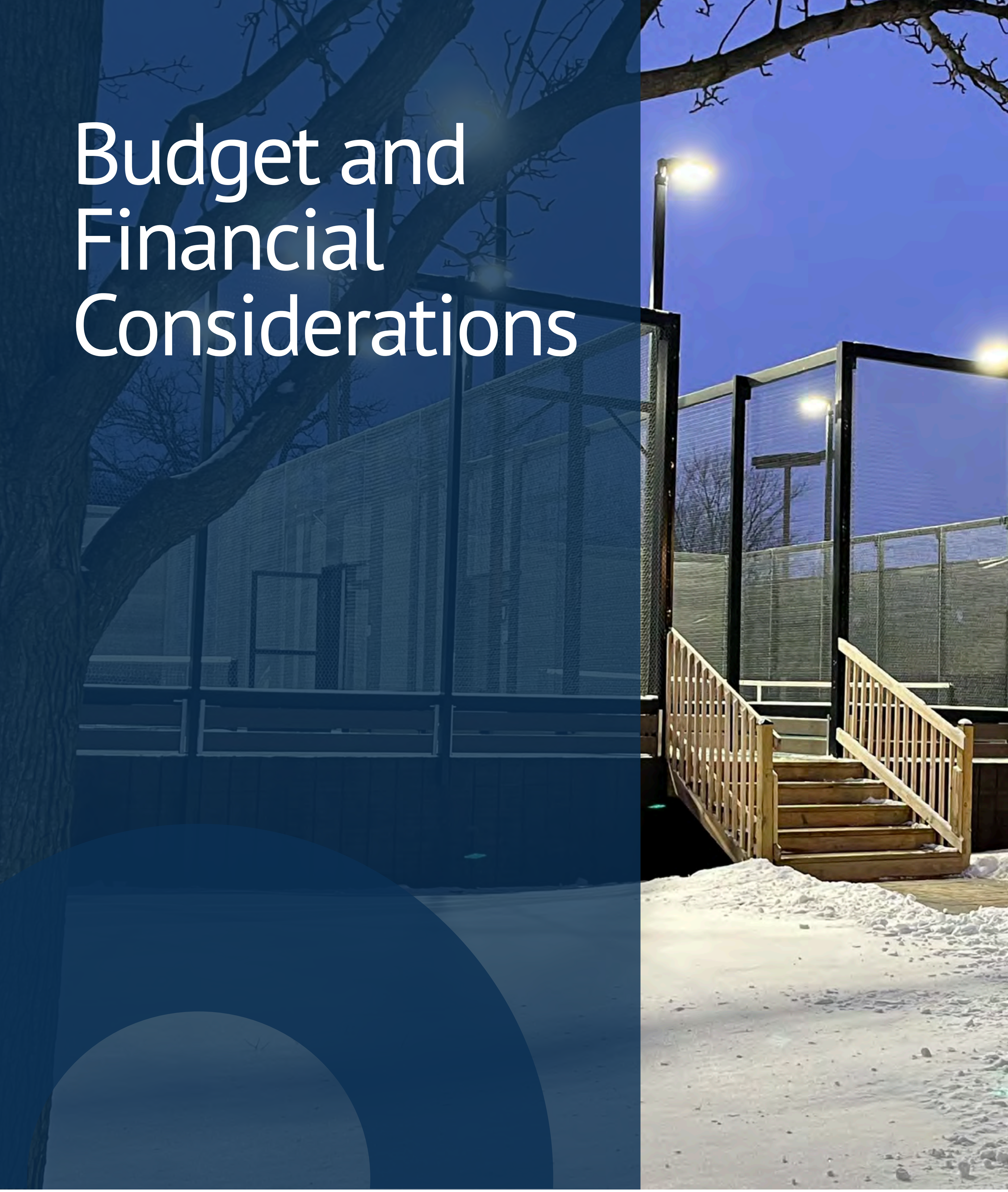
Operationally, the District is reviewing its cost recovery framework (Objective 3.2.1), modernizing its financial decision-making tools (Objective 3.2.2), and evaluating its long-term reserve and pricing strategy (Objective 3.2.3). The District is also evaluating contractual structures, including 70/30 program splits and the golf management contract, to ensure alignment with cost recovery goals and market conditions.

## Improvement Opportunities

The District's most significant improvement opportunities over the Plan period are the following:

- Modernizing the cost recovery framework and fee structure to reflect current direct and indirect cost realities, the District's community benefit classifications established under Board Policy 15.02, and cross-fund allocations.
- Integrating capital prioritization across the CMP, the Skokie Playfield Campus Master Plan, the Waterfront 2030 Master Plan, the ADA Transition Plan, and the Long-Range Capital Plan to support disciplined, transparent investment decisions.
- Strengthening enterprise fund performance at the Tennis, Ice, and Golf operations through targeted improvements to facility condition, programming, customer experience, and contract structure.
- Improving internal IT, data systems, and enterprise platform integration to support better financial decision-making and operational efficiency.
- Strengthening recruitment, retention, and workforce continuity practices to support stable operations and long-term organizational resilience.
- Achieving CAPRA accreditation and Illinois Distinguished Accreditation, with the operational and policy discipline that those processes require.

# Budget and Financial Considerations



## Revenue Sources

The District's primary revenue streams are: (1) property tax revenue from the annual tax levy; (2) user fees from programs, memberships, lakefront passes, golf, ice, tennis, and platform tennis; (3) rental revenue from facilities, fields, and shelters; (4) grants; (5) interest income from invested fund balances; and (6) miscellaneous revenue, including donations, sponsorships, and contractual revenue.

## Operating Budget

The District's 2026 annual operating budget is approximately $15.7 million across all funds, including the Corporate, Recreation, Special Recreation, Liability/Insurance, Audit, IMRF, Social Security, Debt Service, Capital, Tennis, Ice, and Golf funds. The District's enterprise funds (Tennis, Ice, and Golf) are operated with the expectation of substantial cost recovery from user fees, supported by capital investment from the broader fund structure when appropriate. The Corporate and Recreation Funds support general recreation programming, parks, administration, and shared services.

Each fund operates with a budgeted reserve target informed by best practice, GFOA guidance, PDRMA risk-management considerations, and the long-term financial sustainability framework being maintained under Objective 3.2.3. The District's annual budget book documents the full fund structure, revenue assumptions, expenditure plans, capital allocations, and policy priorities.

## Personnel and Workforce

The District is staffed by full-time, part-time, and seasonal employees across Administration, Recreation, Parks, Tennis, Ice, and Golf operations, with leadership functions reporting to the Executive Director. As of Fiscal Year 2026, total staff include 34 full time staff, 55 part-time staff, and approximately 250 seasonal staff across all funds. The District participates in the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) for eligible employees and contributes to Social Security as required.

Workforce planning, succession, training, and retention are addressed in Category 6 of this Plan, including the chain-of-authority and continuity work in Objective 6.5.1 and the alignment of staffing structure with master planning outcomes in Objective 6.5.2.

## Capital Improvements

Capital investment is governed by the District's Long-Range Capital Plan, the Capital Improvement Prioritization Framework being developed under Objective 1.3.4, and the master planning instruments referenced throughout this Plan. The District actively pursues grants and other competitive funding sources to leverage local capital investment, with grant strategy coordinated against the prioritization framework and the Long-Range Capital Plan.

Major capital priorities anticipated during the Plan period include implementation of portions of the Skokie Playfield Campus Master Plan, ice and tennis facility improvements, platform tennis enhancements, lakefront improvements, ADA Transition Plan implementation, asset replacement and end-of-life renewal, and ongoing investment in natural areas, ecological restoration, and park aesthetics.

# Evaluation Process

Monitoring and evaluating implementation is as essential as identifying strategic issues and goals. Evaluation ensures that the District is following the direction established through strategic planning, that staff and Board attention remains aligned with stated priorities, and that operational adjustments can be made as conditions change.

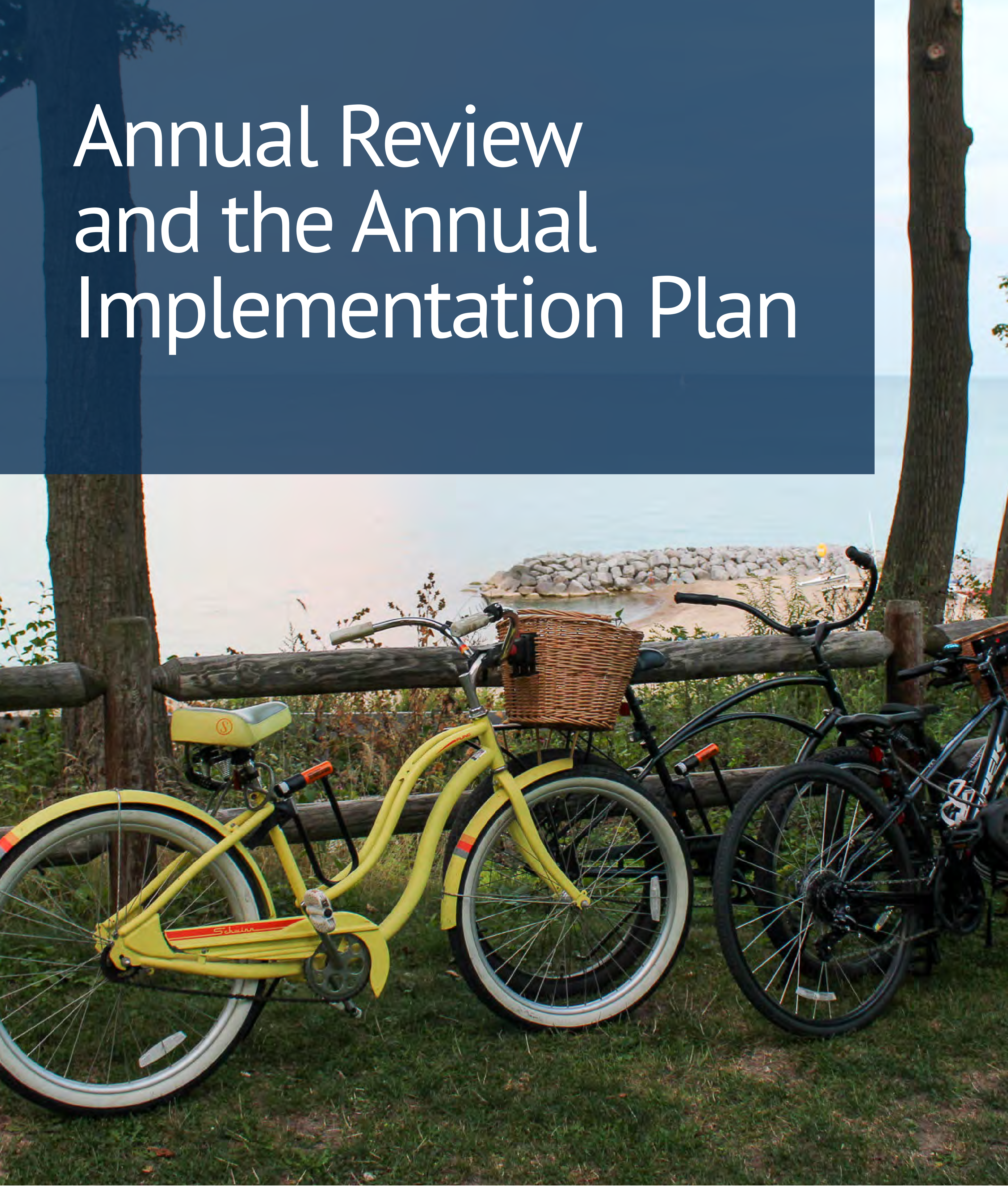
In accordance with Policy 5.01, Section E, progress toward Strategic Plan goals and Annual Implementation Plan objectives shall be reported to the Board of Park Commissioners at least quarterly. Under the direction of the Executive Director, senior leadership staff are responsible for preparing these reports, which document progress against active goals and objectives, identify completed work, in-progress work, deferred work, and any items recommended for revision through the annual update cycle. Quarterly reports will include appropriate performance measures and other information necessary to keep the Board and the public informed regarding implementation progress.

Performance measurement tools, key performance indicators (KPIs), and data collection practices will be developed and maintained under Objective 3.3.3 to support consistent tracking, evaluation, and reporting.

These tools are also intended to:

- Support reporting to the community,
- Alignment with CAPRA and Illinois Distinguished Accreditation requirements,
- Integration with annual budget development,
- Individual staff performance evaluations, and
- Departmental work plans.

# Annual Review and the Annual Implementation Plan



In accordance with Policy 5.01, Section D, the District maintains an Annual Implementation Plan that identifies the strategic priorities, goals, objectives, and work initiatives to be advanced during the upcoming fiscal year. The Annual Implementation Plan operationalizes the Strategic Plan on a year-by-year basis and is included in the annual budget document to provide transparency regarding organizational priorities and planned initiatives.

The Annual Implementation Plan is reviewed and updated annually by the Executive Director and senior leadership staff to:

- Reflect completed work,
- Operational needs,
- Available resources, and
- Emerging priorities.

Review timing is coordinated with the annual budget development process to ensure that priorities, objectives, and resource allocation remain aligned. The updated Annual Implementation Plan is presented to the Board of Park Commissioners through the annual budget approval process.

The Strategic Plan itself covers Fiscal Years 2027 through 2031, consistent with the three-to-five-year horizon established in Policy 5.01, Section C. The Plan will be fully refreshed at the conclusion of the FY2031 cycle in coordination with the Board's review of the Comprehensive Master Plan and the District's accreditation reporting cycles.

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