CRYSTAL LAKE PARK DISTRICT

STRATEGIC PLAN 2017 - 2022

DRAFT 05/24/17
Dear Community Member,

It is my pleasure to present the Crystal Lake Park District's Strategic Plan for 2017–2022. This plan was formulated over the past six months in three phases:

1. Community, board and staff input
2. Staff research and planning
3. Board of Park Commissioners review and approval

Please take the time to read the Executive Summary and review the entire report.

This plan establishes a roadmap for the Park District to achieve success in all areas of its operation and provide the community with an increased sense of pride in their Park District.

Thank you for taking the time to review this plan. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Jason Herbster, Executive Director, at (815) 459-0680 or jherbster@crystallakeparks.org.

Sincerely,

Deborah Gallagher

President, Board of Park Commissioners
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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A few words about Crystal Lake...

Crystal Lake is located 50 miles northwest of Chicago, a short drive from O'Hare International Airport, near several major highways and interstates. The Union Pacific rail line provides easy access to Chicago. Crystal Lake has a reputation as a very good place to live, visit, dine, shop, play and enjoy all the amenities of a modern city of over 40,000. Yet, it still retains small-town charm.

A point of community pride is the bustling, charming, historic Downtown that is thriving with an array of independent shops and restaurants. The Route 14 corridor is filled with big name retailers and restaurants, interspersed with many great local specialty shops and dining places.

Crystal Lake is a regional leader in planning, growth management and municipal services. The town has high-quality programs and municipal services at one of the lowest municipal tax rates in the area. Residents enjoy many excellent schools. Crystal Lake is also the home to McHenry County College. Source - City of Crystal Lake

The Crystal Lake Park District...

The Crystal Lake Park District is a subdivision of the State of Illinois and is organized under the Park District Code of the State of Illinois.

The Crystal Lake Park District was formed by vote of the residents in 1921 to protect public access to Crystal Lake.

As the Crystal Lake Park District nears 100 years old, it has grown substantially since its inception and continues to be committed to preserving and protecting the land and water areas over which it has stewardship. At the same time, it strives to provide high quality recreational opportunities desired by the Park District residents. Public parks remain the backbone of a healthy community. Today, the Crystal Lake Park District is the caretaker of over 1,400 acres of park land spanning 42
properties in southeast McHenry County, providing a healthy green infrastructure for a modern, vibrant, suburban area. The boundaries of the Park District include the City of Crystal Lake, the Village of Lakewood and a portion of Lake in the Hills. This brings the total population served by the Park District to over 60,000 residents.

The Crystal Lake Park District offers a wide variety of year-round general interest programs, athletic programs, in-house and travel leagues, camps and special events. Program listings are published three times a year in a seasonal brochure sent to all residents.

In addition to being caretaker for over 1,400 acres of open space, the Park District oversees:

- **230-acre Crystal Lake** (city's namesake) for fishing, boating, swimming and skating in the winter.

- **Crystal Lake Beaches** – The Park District operates Main Beach and West Beach with convenient hours, lifeguards, swim lessons and boat rentals that include paddle boats, canoes, sailboats, kayaks and paddle boards.

- **Barlina House Preschool** – Home to educating 3-5-year-old children in a fun environment. Instructors are licensed and experienced early childhood educators.

- **Lippold Park** – Features the Hound Town Dog Park, Family Golf Center, a disc golf course and athletic fields for soccer, lacrosse, football, baseball and more.

- **Nature Center** – A great place to drop in and learn about nature specific to the area. The center offers programs for all age groups large and small.

- **Park Place** – A full-service banquet facility perfect for special celebrations, business retreats and family gatherings.

- **The Racket Club** – A state-of-the-art indoor/outdoor tennis center features nine indoor cushioned hard courts and a wide variety of tennis programs for all skill levels and ages taught by skilled tennis professionals.
• **Veteran Acres Park** – Is 140 acres offering something for every season including hiking trails, sledding, a splash pad, cross-country skiing and fishing.

• **Sterne’s Woods and Fen** – This pristine 185 acre woods features 40 acres of wetlands that include a rare fen, marsh and sedge meadows.

• **Colonel Palmer House** – This historic home established in 1858 sits on its original site. The home is leased by the Park District from the City of Crystal Lake and contains the offices of the Crystal Lake Historical Society.

**What the Crystal Lake Park District has done recently...**

In recent years, the Crystal Lake Park District has successfully accomplished:

- Major renovation of the Main Beach Pavilion Room allowing for expanded uses, such as summer programming and special events.

- Recipient of major grants:
  - $400,000 OSLAD (Open Space Land Acquisition & Development) grant for Main Beach boat house replacement, playground replacement, beach expansion, covered picnic area, landscaping, lighting and walkway upgrades.
  - Recipient of $110,000 IEPA (Illinois Environmental Protection Agency) Section 319 Grant to restore the stream corridor and naturalize two detention basins at Fetzner Park.
  - State of Illinois Energy Grants for the renovation of The Racket Club that included a new indoor court surface, high volume ceiling fans and new LED lighting funded by grants totaling $100,000. This improvement has reduced electrical consumption by 40%.

- Property Acquisition – Three parcels of land totaling over 51 acres for passive use.
Investing in and sustaining the future of our parks and facilities:

- Veteran Acres playground and shelter replacement, new splash pad and solar powered washroom facility. Parking and handicap accessibility improvements throughout the park.

- Woodscreek playground and shelter replacement, new splash pad, additional tennis court, bocce ball court and baggo court. Interior building renovation.

- Interior renovation to the Nature Center including restrooms, staff work areas and displays. Improvement of handicap accessibility to all areas.

- Major interior renovations to Grand Oaks Recreation Center/Active Adult Center to improve aesthetics and comfort for users.

- Continued annual management of Crystal Lake including eradication of invasive plant species to improve recreational usability of the lake.

- Echo Products, Inc. joint agreement with the Crystal Lake Park District at Lippold Park includes Lippold Park as a BETA (test) site for Robotic Mowing and Golf Ball Picking operations - provided at no cost to the Park District. Included in the agreement are four (4) robotic mowers and one (1) robotic golf ball picker with an approximate investment by Echo Products, Inc. of $100,000.00. A substantial savings in man hours is a result of this great joint venture.

- Park Place Banquet Facility has new flooring throughout the main level, new windows in various areas and a new ice maker.

- The Racket Club reduced fulltime staffing levels by 67% over the past four years while maintaining and exceeding previous levels of customer service and program offerings.

- Interior renovations to the Lippold Family Golf Center including new flooring, ADA doors for public access, new ceiling and ceiling lights, new baseboards.

- Replacement of all Lippold Family Golf Center equipment including but not limited to: hitting mats, range vehicle, Dixie Chopper mower and all patron related
equipment for both mini golf and driving range improvement of all thirty-six (36) holes of mini golf with new fairway/green carpet.

- The Crystal Lake Park District has offered over 1000 programs and processed over 9,100 registrations this past year. Program improvements include:
  
  - Increase and upgrade of Nature Center offerings with focus on Boy and Girl Scout programs that are available to the general public.
  
  - Major review of recreation program offerings resulting in improved class offerings, efficient building usage and an improved bottom line for recreation services.
  
  - Extended Time, the Park District before /after school program offered in partnership with District 47, is utilized by over 500 students and now offers nutritional snacks.
  
  - Introduction of Rainout Line, E-newsletters, Survey Monkey, and WhenToWork to participants and staff has made communication more efficient for everyone.
  
  - Restructured fitness classes to create a more user-friendly schedule as well as upgrades to the equipment and locations.
  
  - Active Adult Center moved to Grand Oaks providing a more inviting environment. Drop in program attendance continue to increase each year as does the enrollment in the senior trip program.
- Additional nights were added to both Mom/Son and Daddy/Daughter Date Nights. Moving these events to a new location, changing the themes and upgrading food and activities rejuvenated these events.

- Art and Cooking classes have grown over the last several years with new instructors, room renovations and a more diverse selection of class offerings.

- New Drop-In Open Tot Gym is growing in numbers. This program offers a great location for parents/grandparents to bring their children for socialization and play during the winter.

- Summer, outdoor recreational basketball was new in 2016 and was popular for the youth in the community.

- Adult volleyball leagues saw growth in 2016.

- Extended Time and Camp registration is now offered online for the convenience of the parents.

- Increased program offerings and Summer Sundays at the Colonel Palmer House.

- Barlina House Preschool added a summer program offering to extend the program to provide a year-round option.

  - At the beaches:
    - 20,000 paid visitors enjoy the Crystal Lake beaches annually.
    - Picnic table resident reservations at Main Beach have been introduced and have created better customer service for patrons.
• Beach office is now operated by specific staff seven days a week during the summer to provide a more professional approach to the beach operations, including onsite assistance to the camp program families.

• West Beach and Main Beach operation seasons are now identical and operate Memorial Day until Labor Day.

• Main Beach Pavilion summer reservations began in 2014. Prior to this the indoor room was not rented out in the summer. The community can now enjoy private indoor events at Main Beach.

  o Improved Communication:
    • Development of the new Crystal Lake Park District website.
    • New district-wide promotional banner program of Crystal Lake Park District offerings to increase visibility in the community.

  o Safety:
    • Safety standard improvements and additional in-service training for lifeguards have resulted in improved audits.
    • The Crystal Lake Park District continues to provide our young workers with a professional experience in a fun, safe, learning and supportive environment.

  o Awards and Recognition:
    • The Crystal Lake Park District was recognized as a Distinguished Accredited Agency by the Illinois Association of Park Districts and Illinois Park & Recreation Association for excellence in Park and Recreation Management.
    • GFOA (Government Finance Officers Association) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.
    • PDRMA (Park District Risk Management Agency) Risk Management Loss Control Review-received a 98.7% rating on the most recent review.
Crystal Lake Park District Strategic Planning for 2017-2022...

In the summer of 2016, the Crystal Lake Park District Board and staff initiated a five-year strategic planning process for the years 2017-2022. There were three phases to this process.

- **Phase 1: Research and Issue Identification** – The Park District conducted stakeholder (Board, staff and community) research to identify strategic issues, focusing on those items that were most important to the future success of the Park District over the next five years.

- **Phase 2: Strategic Initiative Development** – The above research helped the District leadership to identify important issues that needed to be addressed going forward, define strategic initiatives over the next five years as well as identify associated recommendations, tasks and action timelines.

- **Phase 3: Review and approval** – The plan will be reviewed by the Crystal Lake Park District Board of Park Commissioners then placed on public display for comment. The Board will then be asked to consider approval of the plan.

Additional details about the Crystal Lake Park District strategic planning process...

Between September 2016 - February 2017, the Park District utilized several approaches to solicit feedback and gather input for the Strategic Plan.

- A strategic planning workshop with Park Board members was conducted. A fundamental component of this research was the development of a consolidated SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis.

- An Executive Steering Committee (ESC) was formed. The ESC consisted of 15 members of the Park District leadership team. Several ESC meetings/workshops were held to develop the strategic initiatives and related recommendations.

- Leader-to-leader interviews were conducted by the leadership team members with selected community leaders to solicit their input.

- Two “World Café” community meetings were conducted.
Stakeholder’s feedback was then utilized to develop the themes and many of the recommendations for each initiative.

See attachment A on page 34 for details of the ESC SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats). See attachment B on page 35 for details of the Park Board SWOT. See attachment C on pages 36-43 for a summary of themes and supporting comments from various stakeholders.

This collective research allowed the District to identify six, forward-looking strategic initiatives to be achieved in the 2017-2022 timeframe.

1. **Protect, Improve and Advance our Park Land and Facilities**
2. **Deliver Exceptional Customer Experiences**
3. **Foster Intergovernmental and Community Relations**
4. **Communicate Our Message and Enhance Our Image**
5. **Assure Financial Stability**
6. **Employee Engagement, Development and Succession Planning**

A team leader was assigned to each initiative along with staff team members to...

- Study and analyze each initiative.
- Clarify and define the initiative.
- Develop recommendations with specific steps that must be taken to achieve the stated initiative. The recommendations will be turned into objectives with specific tasks and timelines.
- Define measures of success to monitor the progress towards attainment of the initiative.

In summary, this plan is a result of community input and valuable feedback from key community stakeholders. It establishes a roadmap over the next five years for the Park District Board and staff to continue to strive for excellence in services and increase pride in our community.

The illustration and text on the next two pages summarize the research, Input, and resulting strategic initiatives
DRAFT-Crystal Lake Park District Strategic Planning (2017-2022)

**Mission:** To enhance the lives of our residents by providing programs, services, facilities and open spaces that safely promote health, recreation and community in an environmentally and fiscally responsible manner.

**Strategic initiatives**

- **Protect, Improve and Advance our Park Land and Facilities**
- **Deliver Exceptional Customer Experiences**
- **Foster Intergovernmental and Community Relationships**
- **Communicating our Message and Enhancing our Image**
- **Assure Financial Stability**
- **Employee Engagement, Development and Succession Planning**

**Park Board input**
- Board workshop to identify critical issues and opportunities
- Park Board review and approval of initiatives

**Staff input**
- Multiple Leadership team meetings to identify critical issues, opportunities and strategic initiatives
- Staff work to develop initiatives and recommendations

**Community input**
- Community Meetings
- Leader to Leader Interviews
- Plan posted on website for community feedback
**DRAFT-Crystal Lake Park District Strategic Planning (2017-2022)**

**Mission:** To enhance the lives of our residents by providing programs, services, facilities and open spaces that safely promote health, recreation and community in an environmentally and fiscally responsible manner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protect, Improve and Advance our Park Land and Facilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify the recreational needs of the public, both now and in the future</td>
<td>1. Make recreational programs, facilities, and parks information easily accessible and predominately noticeable</td>
<td>1. City of Crystal Lake and Village of Lakewood</td>
<td>1. Expand utilization of current and new marketing platforms</td>
<td>1. Develop new alternative revenue sources; decrease expenses</td>
<td>1. Overall general development</td>
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<td>2. Inventory and assess current facilities and open spaces</td>
<td>2. Provide efficient and user friendly processes and forms of registration</td>
<td>2. School Districts</td>
<td>2. Improve internal communication and cooperation</td>
<td>2. Develop a five year financial plan</td>
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<td>3. Determine feasibility and priority of public needs</td>
<td>3. Effectively communicate to the community that recreational offerings service all demographics</td>
<td>3. Public Library</td>
<td>3. Updated, consistent logo/branding campaign</td>
<td>3. Continue to focus on safety and risk management</td>
<td>3. Employee development</td>
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<td>4. Develop a five year plan to renovate, remodel or rebuild current facilities to meet the needs of the public</td>
<td>4. Evaluate and enhance all facilities and parks for quality patron experience</td>
<td>4. Affiliate groups</td>
<td>4. Create interest and awareness of the CLPD services</td>
<td>4. Integrate efforts to fully understand finances across all departments</td>
<td>4. Plan for employee succession</td>
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<td>5. Develop a long-term strategy to increase the number and type of recreational facilities available to residents</td>
<td>5. Retain customer loyalty</td>
<td>5. Community service organizations</td>
<td>5. Increase the level of employee engagement</td>
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STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES 2017-2022

INITIATIVE #1: Protect, Improve and Advance our Park Land and Facilities

The Crystal Lake Park District will improve our existing parks and facilities, protect our natural areas and open spaces and invest resources in the long-term recreational needs of our community.

BACKGROUND

The Crystal Lake Park District has a long history of proactively acquiring park lands. Between the early 1970’s and late 1990’s, Park District land holdings grew from 300 acres to over 1,100 acres. At the same time, the population was exploding, growing from 14,000 residents in 1970 to 50,000 by the year 2000. Today’s Park District acreage totals 1,400, spanning 42 properties with a population nearing 60,000 residents. During these decades of tremendous growth, income from property taxes increased, but the ability to issue bonds for capital development projects was frozen at the 1991 rate. These factors still contribute to the Crystal Lake Park District’s current situation of having a ratio of land vs. population which is well in excess of the national average. Conversely, the shortage of dedicated recreation buildings has made it difficult to adequately provide the quality indoor facility space expected by our residents for a wide variety of recreational programming. In some cases, residents fill their recreation needs elsewhere by traveling outside of the community’s boundaries for facilities and programs.

The benefit of the District’s historic land acquisition philosophy has been the protection of vast areas of natural vegetation, including two Illinois Nature Preserves that are unique and provide abundant opportunities for passive recreation. These large tracts of land greatly enhance the quality of life for our residents, providing hiking trails, fishing piers, bike paths, a Nature Center, wildlife habitat and picnic shelters throughout a diverse array of wetlands, woodlands and prairie. There is no doubt that the Crystal Lake Park District provides large and high quality open spaces for our residents, which is not always typical of recreation agencies in northern Illinois.

This strategic initiative, Protect, Improve and Advance our Park Land and Facilities, addresses the need to care for our precious natural areas, while increasing the usefulness of our bricks-and-mortar facilities to meet the needs of today’s active recreation participants. Our existing recreation buildings include:

- Main Beach: constructed in 1926, remodeled in 1998 and 2016. One large program room, one small program room. Concession stand, restrooms and offices to support beach operation.
- Park Place: constructed as a private home in 1929 with banquet hall addition built by the American Legion in 1966. Purchased and remodeled by Crystal Lake Park District in

- Spoerl Park: One program room with kitchenette. Constructed in 1975. Obtained through merger with Manor Park District.
- Woodscreek Activity Building: Constructed in 1996. One program room with full kitchen.

The buildings are generally old and used for multiple purposes. Most have been renovated over the years to modernize mechanical equipment, replace worn out fixtures and provide handicap accessibility, but the fact remains that our buildings lack the appeal of the new, modern facilities provided by many of our competitors. The West Beach building is the exception, being only five years old. However, due to its location and site constraints, it is relatively small and parking is limited and awkward.

While the Crystal Lake Park District has remained progressive in the acquisition and protection of open spaces and natural areas, we have fallen behind in the development of new, modern recreational facilities to meet the needs of our residents. The largest limiting factor has been funding. Other factors exist and are discussed in a later section. The challenge for the next five years is to identify the needs of the public, inventory and assess our current facilities, and develop a strategy as well as set funding priorities to economically and effectively adapt our current facilities to better meet the public’s needs.

The Crystal Lake Park District has continually sought to gain input, both formally and informally, from our residents and users of our programs and facilities. Attitude and interest surveys, program evaluations, focus groups, social media and casual conversation are all methods used to collect opinions. Combining this input with the recommendations of our professional staff and elected Board of Commissioners, areas for improvement include:
• The need for a centralized multi-purpose building to provide recreational opportunities that are currently outsourced or held in non-Park District buildings, specifically gymnasiums and swimming pools.
• The need for additional passive recreation facilities and the improvement of those we currently have, specifically trails and the Dog Park.
• Renovation of income-producing facilities and programs, specifically the Boncosky Softball Complex, Barlina House Preschool, the Lippold Park Family Golf Center, Park Place and The Racket Club.
• Master planning for currently undeveloped properties, specifically Sunset Meadows Park and Shamrock Hills.
• Continued protection of natural areas especially our Illinois Nature Preserves and Crystal Lake.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Identify the recreational needs of the public, both now and in the future, within the next 1-2 years.
   A. Conduct a statistically accurate community-wide needs assessment survey to determine current and future needs and desires of our residents, including their level of interest to increase funding for facility improvements.
   B. Identify trends in recreation that may affect our residents.
   C. Identify demographic trends that may influence future needs of our residents.
   D. Determine the importance that facilities play in the recreational choices of the community.

II. Inventory and assess the Park District’s current facilities and open spaces within 6-12 months.
   A. Study all existing facilities to determine what we currently have.
   B. Determine lifespan and renovation needs of existing facilities.
   C. Determine future possible uses for existing facilities.
   D. Determine highest and best use of all buildings and open spaces.
   E. Include updates/additions to the Crystal Lake Park District existing Capital Replacement Schedule as part of the process.

III. Within first 24 months of Strategic Plan, determine feasibility and priority of public needs.
   A. Compare the needs assessment data to the existing facility data.
   B. Prioritize public needs based on trends and competition.
   C. Include a Board member, or several Board members, in this working group.
   D. Base all decisions on the Mission Statement of the Crystal Lake Park District.
IV. Develop a five-year plan to renovate, remodel or rebuild current facilities to meet the needs of the public.
   A. Use data from long range financial planning to determine what can realistically be accomplished in five years.
   B. The plan for buildings and facilities should be specific and include specific space requirements, including space for storage. *(Examples: A program room that will be used for dance activities shall include full length mirrors, barres, and hard surface flooring, and shall be a minimum of XX SF in size. Each building that contains space for recreational programs shall have adequate space dedicated to the storage of the equipment needed for the program. A comfortable and convenient waiting area shall be provided in all buildings used for recreational programs.*)
   C. The plan for parks and open spaces should be specific and include projects to protect and improve the aesthetics, safety and usability of public parks. *(Examples: Replace all missing plants in landscaped beds. Improve mowed areas with seed and fertilizer to reduce weeds. Convert XX% of mown turf areas into landscapes to support native plants and animals.*)
   D. Review and update plan at least once a year to adjust for changing priorities or emergency situations.
   E. Develop a plan to help communicate the needs and many benefits of the expanded facilities to the Crystal Lake Park District residents.

V. Develop a long-term strategy to increase the number and type of recreational facilities available to our residents.
   A. Conduct a needs assessment at year 1-2 of five year plan.
   B. Use data from needs assessment and study of trends.
   C. Use data from long range financial planning.
   D. If necessary, seek voter approval to increase funding to support a new community center.

VI. Develop a goal or policy statement to guide future acquisition of open spaces, natural areas and facilities.
   A. Include Board members in the working group that develops this recommendation.
   B. Base goal or policy statement on the Mission Statement of the Crystal Lake Park District.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS
- Development, adoption and implementation of a five-year capital improvement plan.
- Development, adoption and approval of a long-term facility use and community center development strategy (five years and longer.)
- Development, adoption and implementation of a policy for future acquisition of open spaces, natural areas and facilities.
INITIATIVE #2: Deliver Exceptional Customer Experiences

The Crystal Lake Park District provides both passive and active recreation experiences, programs and events in multiple parks, facilities and spaces throughout the community. The Park District is committed to providing exceptional spaces and experiences. This forward-moving approach requires continuous adaptation to the ever-changing needs of the community.

BACKGROUND
The Park District continues to make strides to enhance facilities, parks and programs. Many upgrades to facilities, parks and equipment have been accomplished. Many business operations have been streamlined and improved to give customers a better experience. New technology has been introduced to more efficiently communicate with patrons. (i.e. RecTrac registration software, Constant Contact email software, Rainout Line app, Survey Monkey online survey program, and an upgraded website design). A program analysis process was implemented to monitor program life cycles. The Park District has a strong before/after school and camp program that service over 500 families each year. In the last three years, participation in fitness programs has doubled. Participation in art and cooking programs has tripled over the last few years. While these are outstanding accomplishments, the Park District must continue to offer exceptional experiences to remain a high-performance agency.

Using feedback from the community and staff enables the Park District to focus on goals for the upcoming five years to deliver exceptional and diverse recreational programs, spaces and experiences. Recent community feedback suggests continued improvements be made in Park District offerings, improved registration and participation experience.

RECOMMENDATIONS
I. Make recreational programs, facilities and parks information easily accessible and predominately noticeable in the community.
   A. Consistently adapt to digital analytics of social media and digital content. (i.e. demographics, trends, new technology)
   B. Investigate improving trail map system including standardized trail marking system combined with utilizing new technology for trail mapping.
   C. Advocate Park District wide positive marketing from all employees.
   D. Research ways to increase public awareness of the Park District’s significance to the community and methods of implementation.

II. Provide efficient and user-friendly processes and forms of registration for Park District programs and facility usage.
A. Monitor technology trends regarding program registration to ensure that we are meeting the needs of customers and their technology preferences.
B. Correct/omit obstacles that make registration difficult for customers. (i.e. Limited office hours, no one available after most work schedules, needing to come in for facility bookings, or to use household credit, encourage staff knowledge of registration system and processes so that the process questions can be answered by any staff member)
C. Create and implement District-wide customer service standards that promote enthusiasm, professionalism, willingness to serve, caring, and thankfulness.
D. Constantly review key processes and identify methods to streamline and improve registration process for staff and public. Insure technology and software is being used to its full potential.

III. Effectively communicate to the community that the Park District’s recreational offerings service all demographics, fill current recreational needs and are relevant to current trends.
A. Continue to foster public feedback and adapt quickly to needed changes.
B. Identify underserved demographics and their recreational needs.
C. Explore other community facilities to use for programs. (i.e. schools, Raue Center for the Arts)
D. Establish criteria to benchmark with best in class recreational organizations. (i.e. other Park Districts, Willow Creek Church, Health Bridge, other commercial agencies)
E. Continue program analysis tactics (i.e. program life cycle, competitive research, pricing index, SWOT analysis)

IV. Evaluate and enhance all facilities and parks for quality patron experience.
A. Define and implement standards for experience considerations (safety, cleanliness, comfort, accessibility, customer service, supplies, amenities and appearance) that staff can fully understand and monitor.
B. Develop budget action plan as needed for enhancements.
C. Develop and implement a process to continuously monitor experience considerations.

V. Retain customer loyalty.
A. Implement satisfaction survey processes for programs, facilities and parks that include gathering of feedback, sharing feedback within departments as needed, and action plans.
B. Research new ways to gain community feedback and engagement (i.e. community engagement committee, technology resources, off-site surveying utilizing community and business partner sites, various survey techniques)
C. Develop loyalty/appreciation programs and promotions.
VI. **Develop and document Best Practices to ensure consistency within the Park District.**
   A. Customer communication process (email signatures, handling of phone calls, etc.)
   B. Customer service processes.
   C. Registration/Reservation processes.
   D. Survey process.
   E. Overview of staff responsibilities – who to go to for what.

**MEASURES OF SUCCESS**
- Increase patron usage of technology.
- Increase in surveys returned and with higher ratings.
- Increase in returning and new participants.
- Best practice guidelines for customer service, registration, communication, feedback adopted and used by all staff.
- Residents rate Crystal Lake Park District as the first place they look to fill their recreational needs.
- Increase in participation.
- Survey data showing that customers are engaged and proud of their Park District.
- Offer high quality recreational programs to retain staff by ensuring that programs are run efficiently and based on community wants and needs.
STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES 2017-2022

INITIATIVE #3: Foster Intergovernmental and Community Relationships

As the Crystal Lake Park District looks to improve the services offered to the community, the strengthening of relationships is critical. While the community partners (the City, Village, School Districts, Library, Affiliates, and Community Service Organizations) have acknowledged their pleasure with the new approaches at the Crystal Lake Park District, it is important that relationships strengthen along with the services offered.

BACKGROUND
The Crystal Lake Park District has been a long standing, important part of the quality of the community since its inception. Historically, the Park District’s relationships with other entities have, at times, traveled the gamut from excellent to average. Currently, relationships are very solid across the board. Building upon the improved relationships that have developed over the past several years is critical to the benefit of the community improving as a whole.

RECOMMENDATIONS
I. City of Crystal Lake and Village of Lakewood
   A. Stay current on existing intergovernmental agreements.
   B. Administrative team continuously works on positive relationships with counterparts at municipalities.
   C. Develop cooperative ideas with municipalities that benefit all residents.

II. School Districts
   A. Begin using the intergovernmental agreements for expanded programming.
   B. Establish relationships at the appropriate staff levels.
   C. Be responsive to school district needs, requests and concerns.
   D. Solidify scheduling processes with school districts.
   E. As the “#1 first time employer of youth”, partner with D155 to employ D155 students.

III. Public Library
    A. Work with Library to avoid duplicate services.
    B. Work with Library to cross-promote programming.
    C. Expand on the benefits of Crystal Lake Park District summer reading program.
    D. Determine if Library services can be expanded through Crystal Lake Park District.

IV. Affiliate Groups - The Crystal Lake Park District has many affiliate groups that use the facilities throughout the Park District. It is important that we maintain a strong working relationship with these groups. In a sense they are the frontlines at many of the parks.
    A. Determine value in Crystal Lake Park District representation at affiliate board meetings.
B. Evaluate what Crystal Lake Park District does for affiliates and determine what else can be done to strengthen relationships.
C. Review what affiliates do for Crystal Lake Park District and residents and determine what else can be done to strengthen relationship.
D. Determine if more than just the annual affiliate meeting is necessary.
E. Request affiliates who currently distribute newsletters to send a copy to the Crystal Lake Park District to keep lines of communication strong.

V. **Community Service Organizations** - Identify local community service organizations that the Crystal Lake Park District should consider having a staff member join. One benefit would be enhancing our image within these organizations with our staff. Examples of community service organizations would include: Crystal Lake Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions Club, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Crystal Lake Food Pantry, Boy and Girl Scouts
   A. Attend regular meetings of the community service organization.
   B. Help/attend special events of the community service organization.
   C. Allow staff to become involved with service organizations as long as it does not negatively impact their jobs.
   D. Determine what benefits exist for the Crystal Lake Park District by being a member each community service organization.

VI. **Relationships in General**
   A. Assign a liaison with other governmental entities when possible.
   B. Continually remind other government and community groups about what we do and where we are going.
   C. Evaluate and remove barriers between the Crystal Lake Park District and other government and community organizations and address them in an appropriate manner.
   D. Create trusting relationships.
   E. Encourage and recognize the importance of staff involvement in the community.
   F. Enhancement of a positive image.
   G. Communicate the benefits of what the Crystal Lake Park District means to the community.
   H. Increase residents’ pride in their Park District.
   I. Increase staff presence for welcoming attendees at special events.

**MEASURES OF SUCCESS**
- Positive overall community satisfaction (customer survey results).
- Cooperation with other municipalities. Measured by intergovernmental agreements, partnerships, etc.
- Staff involvement in Community Service Organizations.
STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES 2017-2022

INITIATIVE #4: Communicate Our Message and Enhance Our Image

“Making Our Message Matter”
Achievement of this initiative will define the Crystal Lake Park District image, influence efficiency, and simplify communication methods. This initiative will focus on 1) steps needed to create the communication plan, and 2) how the communication plan will raise awareness about Crystal Lake Park District programs, facilities, mission, and future goals of our community-focused organization.

BACKGROUND
The Crystal Lake Park District is viewed in a positive light by the community. As an organization, we need to constantly assess how to best deliver our message and communicate our value to the community. In today’s real-time information culture, expanding our communications methods beyond traditional means is necessary to reach our external and internal audiences.

Externally, increasing public awareness through education, branding, and marketing materials and staff appearance is needed. A concentrated communication effort will spotlight what is offered by the Crystal Lake Park District, raise awareness of Crystal Lake Park District facilities and programs, and emphasize that the Crystal Lake Park District is vital, relevant and valuable to all residents and businesses in the community.

Internally, focus needs to be placed on the positive ideas, good or bad, that are shared and vetted. A collective thought process will almost always produce the best ideas and direction over a single individual’s ideas.

An aspect of communication that cannot be overlooked is “branding”. A consistent and persistent branding program must be included within our overall communication plan. This must be accomplished both externally and internally so that staff at all levels can effectively deliver a consistent message and image within the Crystal Lake Park District and throughout the community.

In summary, the communication plan will help focus our message, enhance our image and reach our targeted audience. Key steps in this effort will include the following:

- Develop methods to communicate effectively, completely and concisely between departments and with the community.
- Create awareness of the Crystal Lake Park District’s core values, and mission within the community and with staff.
- Develop a branding concept/campaign used throughout the organization and community aimed at building the Crystal Lake Park District image.
RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Expand utilization of current and new marketing platforms and marketing formats, social media, brochure, electronic direct marketing, etc.
   A. Continued utilization of all communication outlets including social media, with an eye on trends and new opportunities.
   B. Upgrade and improve Crystal Lake Park District website as needed for performance and appeal aspects on a continual basis.
   C. Enhance the look of the Park District brochure.
   D. Brand all marketing pieces.

II. Improve Internal Communication and Cooperation.
   A. Establish Crystal Lake Park District intranet.
   B. Training materials inputted and available on intranet.
   C. Post Committee meeting minutes on the intranet.
   D. Post Policy Manuals on the intranet.
   E. Board Agendas and Board Packages placed on intranet.
   F. Establish Crystal Lake Park District University for trainings and informational materials.

III. Updated, consistent Logo/Branding campaign.
   A. Design and adopt a new logo.
   B. Update building identification signage.
   C. Inquire about the possibility of street directional signage for park/facility locations.
   D. Establish consistent clothing/appearance.
   E. Continue the program of consistent banners for events and activities.
   F. Use electronic marquees where possible.
   G. Develop a standardized header/footer for external communications.
   H. Determine cost analysis with regards to potential logo/branding changes.
   I. Evaluate cost/benefit for each phase.

IV. Create Interest and Awareness of the Crystal Lake Park District services.
   A. Communicate Crystal Lake Park District Core Values and Mission and why they improve and enhance the quality of the community as well as the many benefits to the individuals and families we serve.
   B. Share Crystal Lake Park District successes, achievements, accomplishments at every opportunity.
   C. Determine how to best reach those in the community that are not receiving our message.
   D. Share patron testimonials.
   E. Share Park District and staff successes.
   F. Develop a citizen engagement committee to assist with ideas for a 100-year anniversary celebration in 2021.
G. Evaluate the timing of park brochures to the community and if needed make necessary adjustments (Compare schedules to neighboring park districts, conduct focus groups with users and consider impact on staffing and cost effectiveness.)

V. **Increase the Level of Employee Engagement**
   A. Establish and hold quarterly supervisory meetings to address concerns, communicate updates and solicit input from all staffing levels.
   B. Further develop cohesiveness via team building programs/exercises/activities.
   C. Increase visitations to programs, parks and facilities by leadership team staff.
   D. Continue to create an atmosphere of professionalism and pride within the organization.

**MEASURES OF SUCCESS**
- Increase our social media “friends” level by 20%.
- Attain a 10% increase in our website traffic/page hits.
- Establish timeline for implementing and completing changeover of logo/branding if it is determined to proceed with plan.
- Social Media increases: Likes, Followers and Interactions.
- Website traffic increase higher than industry standards, increased from previous year.
- Interactive brochure usage, increased from previous year.
- E-newsletter, open rate higher than industry standards.
STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES 2017-2022

INITIATIVE #5: Assure Financial Stability

It is a goal of the Crystal Lake Park District to become less reliant on tax dollars as its main revenue source. Continuing to pursue grant opportunities, develop partnerships, and reduce expenses, while maintaining its current property and facilities will contribute to achieving that goal. Costs in many areas will continue to rise prompting the need to expand revenue sources and/or enhance operational efficiency within the Park District.

BACKGROUND
The Crystal Lake Park District’s overall financial condition is currently very healthy. The Park District maintains strong fund balances and surpasses the minimum set by policy. The Park District’s primary funding sources consist of property taxes and user fees/program revenue. Property taxes average 51% of the Park District’s total revenue source. The Park District falls under the tax cap which limits its ability to increase taxes without a referendum. Due to pending legislation that could freeze property taxes permanently, staff must continue to keep the overall financial picture of the Park District at the forefront of any considerations.

The Park District has been awarded several grants in recent years and will continue to apply for grants when appropriate. A capital replacement schedule is in place that the Park District follows as closely as possible. However, with limited funding available, the schedule must be revised on an ongoing basis.

The Park District has historically taken a conservative approach in managing its finances, including the investment policy in place to protect the Park District’s financial resources. Full-time staff comprise less than 15% of the Park District’s total number of employees which offers flexibility in adjusting staffing levels.

The Park District has reacted to the current state of the economy by maximizing the use of existing resources, adjusting program offerings and adjusting staffing levels when appropriate. User fees and programming revenue are monitored by routine evaluation of both activity enrollment levels and financial performance. The Park District’s services and facilities are challenged by competing private businesses and other local governments, additional motivation to provide quality products for a good value. Programming space is limited making it important to evaluate facility usage, ensure proper maintenance and present a favorable and inviting impression.

While the Park District provides the community with significant open space, much of it is not revenue producing. Open space within the community provides a vast benefit to residents but not without a cost to maintain and protect. Careful consideration will be applied before acquiring additional property.
Recommended areas of focus to assure financial stability:
- Maximize program and facility revenues.
- Strengthen internal controls.
- Increase internal audits.
- Remain competitive in the market.

RECOMMENDATIONS
I. Develop new alternative revenue sources; decrease expenses.
   A. Develop the Crystal Lake Park Foundation. Find someone passionate about the community, recreation and the Park District specifically.
   B. Continue to apply for grants.
   C. Develop a financial performance policy. Perform cost/benefit analysis of programs and facilities to gauge performance and establish appropriate benchmarks looking forward.
   D. Expand a list of potential donations, from trees and benches to playgrounds and facilities. Make it easy to donate. Seek corporate sponsors.
   E. Promote volunteerism in appropriate areas to reduce staff costs or enhance services.
      a. Track Park District-wide volunteer hours
      b. Begin tracking affiliate group volunteer hours
      c. Report usage to Park Board annually
   F. Strive for technological efficiencies Park District wide. Introduce Purchase Cards. Explore alternative building access and security.

II. Develop a five year financial plan.
   A. Review bond payment schedule to determine dollars available in the long and short term.
   B. Promote accountability and transparency at all levels.
   C. Develop global financial thinking throughout the Crystal Lake Park District.

III. Continue to focus on safety and risk management.
   A. Continue to research and implement best safety practices.
   B. Update safety manuals to be more user-friendly.
   C. Increase safety training based on the ongoing need throughout the Park District.
   D. Reinforce safety as a core value of the Crystal Lake Park District.

IV. Integrate efforts to fully understand finances across all departments.
   A. Provide internal training on budget format and development.
   B. Develop guidelines to enter budget detail.
   C. Educate staff on debt issuance.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS
- Continued recipient of the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.
- Standard & Poor’s AA bond rating.
- Sustaining or exceeding fund balance goals.
• Development of a Capital Replacement Plan whereas operating dollars are transferred annually.
• Meet established program and facility nets for results based on the new financial performance policy.
• Re-establishment of the Crystal Lake Park Foundation and a listing of events/projects to be undertaken.
• Increase in alternate revenues and volunteer support
INITIATIVE #6: Employee Engagement, Development and Succession Planning

“An Exceptional Workplace in Crystal Lake”

The Crystal Lake Park District will engage employees through careful and proactive consideration of staff’s needs. We will develop them by positioning each individual for success in a way that personally suits him/her. We will successfully facilitate their succession via a clear, thorough, and flexible plan.

BACKGROUND

The Crystal Lake Park District is a mid-size Park District staffed with full time, part time and seasonal employees. The needs of the Park District employees are varied. There has been a steady movement towards replacement of full-time staff by part-time staff when opportunities arise. Consideration needs to be reviewed on the level of education, past work history and the needs of each division of the Park District as they relate to the broad spectrum of the roles and assignment under one organizational umbrella. The Park District administration and Employee Relations Committee actively attempts to engage and develop staff with regular outings, events and meetings throughout the year. The task of keeping employees actively engaged in their work while taking on additional responsibility due to turnover of long time staff members and the Park Districts changes to staffing needs based on technology advancements and program trends.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Overall General Development
   A. Empower managers to be flexible with how they recognize, reward, train, etc. because of the different generational and personality types under their supervision.
   B. Formally introduce and maintain mentorship relationships in the workplace.
   C. Develop measurement tools pertaining to employee engagement.
   D. Carefully screen and select managers and employees that show the ability to adopt Crystal Lake Park District values and possess the ability to be a team player under all circumstances.
   E. Hold managers accountable for their staff’s engagement and development.
   F. Communicate engagement concepts and expectations regularly and act on them consistently. Once information and feedback has been gathered via surveys, focus groups, committees, etc., prove that the findings matter by clearly demonstrating their incorporation.
   G. Provide staff with tools for success, be they physical or regulatory, so their ambitions and goals can be realized.
   H. Allow for cross-training whenever possible so that employees appreciate how others’ roles affect the bigger picture and can even pinch hit if a situation arises.
II. **Employee Engagement**
   A. Recognize employees for jobs well done. It has a direct correlation to increasing work performance.
   B. Rebuild employee trust through interaction between supervisor and employees by acknowledging when tasks are completed in a timely manner. Show respect for the work done.
   C. Value input from employees.
   D. Assign more complex duties to employees who show expertise.
   E. Create opportunities for employees whose performance exceeds expectations with added responsibilities and spread workload.
   F. Encourage employees to get involved on committees. This promotes another outlet for employee engagement.
   G. Display team photos.
   H. Encourage charity and volunteerism.
   I. Recognize and encourage innovation.
   J. Encourage learning by informing staff of upcoming workshops and seminars related to their job.
   K. Make sure employees have the resources they need for success.

III. **Employee Development**
   A. Consider business goals – identify necessary skills, knowledge, and competencies that support this plan.
   B. Develop internal employees. It saves the Park District time and money on recruiting and training.
   C. Talk to one’s employees – an employee’s skill level and career aspirations may differ from what a supervisor thinks they are.
   D. Decide what skills your employees need and provide the resources or access to the resources.
   E. Create an action plan. Development programs can include a combination of formal training, reading, working directly with subject matter experts, one-on-one coaching and mini training sessions.
   F. Apply new skills in the workplace. Set up opportunities where your employees can quickly apply the new skills to the job and get feedback. Listen to the feedback.
   G. Become the premier employer of choice in Crystal Lake.

IV. **Plan for Employee Succession**
   A. Maintain a knowledgeable, experienced, and capable workforce.
   B. Manage risk associated with any type of crucial skills gaps.
   C. Recruit top talent to fill key positions when they become available with as little transition time as possible. Consider performance and not years employed by the District.
   D. Commit to a set of non-negotiable behaviors to guard character and protect the honor of the Park District.
   E. Empower employees’ innovation, inclusion and diversity.
F. Transfer knowledge to an appropriate data base (script or photos) to minimize “brain drain”.

G. Follow a succession plan that puts the best candidates first and not just those with longest tenure. Qualified internal candidates will be considered first for a job opening before external candidates.

**MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

- Measure staff retention within each department and the agency as a whole.
- Fiscal responsibility – Measure cost savings to recruit, train and retain staff.
- Improve efficiencies by cross training of staff to take advantage of new organizational opportunities.
- Safety – Provide a safe work environment that minimizes safety related incidents. This can be formally measured by tracking incidents.
## ATTACHMENT A  Strategic Plan ESC Summary “Quadrant Analysis”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positives</th>
<th>Negatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strengths</strong></td>
<td><strong>Weaknesses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Staff: Loyal, hardworking, and experienced, with broad skill sets and historical knowledge, and new hires with energy and ideas</td>
<td>• No centralized community center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unique natural areas and open space</td>
<td>• Internal staff conflicts and communication disconnect between departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Exceptional stewards of the land that is managed</td>
<td>• Shortage of programming space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Specialized facilities - outdoor sports</td>
<td>• Older satellite facilities - expensive to update</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strong program areas: E.T., camps, Nature, Palmer House, Scout programs, etc.</td>
<td>• Lack of uniform customer service/quality standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strong relationships in the community</td>
<td>• Outdated organizational structures i.e. job responsibilities, procedures, cumbersome processes, “red tape”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• New technology has been implemented</td>
<td>• Funding issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Intergovernmental relationships need improvement - city, county, school district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Threats</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Well-received by constituents (positive public image)</td>
<td>• Tax environment in general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Determining public interest and public’s willingness to invest in a community center</td>
<td>• Overall funding issues and State of Illinois situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish relationships with affiliates and other users</td>
<td>• Decision whether to update facilities or invest in a central community center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Growing trend to get back outside/be healthy</td>
<td>• Staffing issues – part time/28 hours and low wages/minimum wage change/salary caps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Developing a standardized “image” for all areas that promotes Crystal Lake Park District – facilities, marketing, dress, etc.</td>
<td>• Competition for recreation dollars - private vendors, community organizations, sport clubs, schools, library, city, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Re-establishing Park Foundation</td>
<td>• Behind in technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Finding more user-friendly ways to reduce internal paperwork and systems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ATTACHMENT B  Listing of SWOT Items – Board of Park Commissioners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positives</th>
<th>Negatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strengths</strong></td>
<td><strong>Weaknesses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Awesome, Professional staff (4)</td>
<td>- Redundancy-same thing over and over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Public Image Improvement</td>
<td>- Cramped office space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reasonable and progressive Board (2)</td>
<td>- Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sound financial practices (2)</td>
<td>- Land rich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Plentiful land and open space</td>
<td>- Relationship with City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Collaboration</td>
<td>- Social media (digital age)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Great workers</td>
<td>- Marketing strategies to support Crystal Lake Park District (statistics)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Team atmosphere</td>
<td>- Increase ongoing information to the community about Crystal Lake Park District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Strong community</td>
<td>- Limited number of facilities (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Crystal Lake Park District –facilities/programs</td>
<td>- Lack of regulation for piers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Executive Director</td>
<td>- No swimming pool (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Crystal Lake Park District commitment to community</td>
<td>- Low visibility administrative building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Customer service</td>
<td>- There are still people who don’t know who we are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Top-rated trails &amp; parks</td>
<td>- Tax limitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Abundance of diverse &amp; affordable programs (2)</td>
<td>- The Racket Club finances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lake, water-related recreation, rowing, boating (2)</td>
<td>- Age of Admin building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Distinguished Agency &amp; Financial excellence</td>
<td>- Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Board &amp; Director relationship</td>
<td>- Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Land rich/Grounds, amenities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- To build a community center</td>
<td>- Tax freeze - possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- To purchase watershed property and connect parks</td>
<td>- Anti-tax sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- To provide an outdoor pool</td>
<td>- Lack of industry and manufacturing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Educate public on advantages of parks</td>
<td>- TIF districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Land rich</td>
<td>- Tax concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Strong community (want services)</td>
<td>- Library referendum (if it fails)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Rec center with pool</td>
<td>- Community center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Foundation</td>
<td>- Competition (other fitness facilities/pools)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Website link for donations</td>
<td>- State of IL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Improve relationship with city (2)</td>
<td>- CLPL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Heraty property</td>
<td>- YMCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Crystal Lake Park District Infrastructure</td>
<td>- Three Oaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Referendum 2018/19</td>
<td>- Increase the communication involvement in the Crystal Lake Park District programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sunset Meadows</td>
<td>- Competition from Three Oaks &amp; health clubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- City’s support to build a Rec. center</td>
<td>- Not passing referendum to raise money for Rec center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Having total control over the lake and its regulation</td>
<td>- Loose impact fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Stronger economy</td>
<td>- Weak economy (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Changing demographics &amp; increased growth</td>
<td>- Changing demographics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Continue to enhance image</td>
<td>- Taxing limitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Increased cooperation with other taxing bodies</td>
<td>- Resistance to possible community center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase land/build community center</td>
<td>- Decreased participation due to competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Population decrease</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Crystal Lake Park District Issues 2017 - 2022

Issues were identified in workshops with the Executive Steering Committee, Park Board and community. Issues were grouped by theme. The strategic initiative (headline) summarizes the issues to be addressed.

ATTACHMENT C  Listing of Potential Issues to Address

Protect, Improve and Advance Our Park Land and Facilities

Executive Steering Committee

- We will identify what facilities we have that are unique (not duplicated locally) and develop them.
- Modern equipment and facilities with a fresh clean look.
- Renovate or build an addition to address deteriorating facilities.
- Update facilities or consolidate into current facilities/Rec Center
- Conservation of natural areas - issues with new rules coming into play/how to effectively manage these areas to maintain or improve.

Park Board

- Facilities: Community Center and Outdoor Pools, Full Ownership of Lake
- Plan for Sunset Meadows and begin phases
- Development of Heraty Property

Community

- Purchase and protect open space
- Conservation, environmental and green practices
- Walking and biking trails should be improved, maintained and expanded - better connections.
- Keep safety a priority in parks
- Facility with Swimming pool/Rec Center
- Consider future demographic needs and (housing) developments and provide adequate open space for parks
- Expand usage of what we have; eliminate what isn’t working
- Spotlight what is available in parks
- Dog park – expand and add another
- Flood an area for ice skating
- Maximize utilization of existing facilities

Leader-to-Leader

- Community Center/Indoor Pool – place for all generations to use
- Parks/Facilities are well kept
- Continue property acquisition
- Expand Park Place
- Infrastructure projects
- Downsize playground replacements at outlying parks if it makes sense
- Don’t need Community Center – doing well with what we have
Deliver Exceptional Customer Experiences

Executive Steering Committee
- 1921 – 2021 100\textsuperscript{th} anniversary - celebrate the event
- Capitalize on trends and increase programming
- Embrace, promote, protect, maintain and provide opportunities for the current trend to get outdoors.
- Keeping up with the current demographic and cultural changes - regarding programming

Park Board
- Up to date Programming
- Integrate more technology

Community
- Satellite map of bike trails plus increased signage on trails. Coordinate with neighboring communities to connect bike routes
- For the growing senior population:
  - more physical activities (e.g. Cary Park District program)
  - free services - i.e. computer classes
  - Offer programs at times convenient to seniors (not evenings)
  - Pickle ball
- Earlier and more frequent communication - use social media, email blasts, etc.
- More programs for middle school age kids – after school, evenings, weekends
  - joint cooperation with schools
  - Activity bus
  - Teach lifelong recreational and conservation skills
  - Involve and mentor youth – promote volunteerism
- Open gyms for moms, dads, preschoolers especially in winter
- Affordable programming for youth and aged
- Provide more innovative services related to current events/seasons i.e. Pokemon or winter-related activities i.e. cross country ski, snowshoeing
- More events – e.g. marathon, golf tournament, polar plunge.

Leader-to-Leader
- Awareness of what library and Crystal Lake Park District are doing to eliminate duplication of services
- Partnership enhancement
- How to support families (school aged) and the new senior population
- Expand sports and health options in schools, possibly done cooperatively
- Lighted schoolhouse concept
Issues were identified in workshops with the Executive Steering Committee, Park Board and community. Issues were grouped by theme. The strategic initiative (headline) summarizes the issues to be addressed.

Leader-to-Leader (continued)

- Keeping pace with quality service and changing programs
- Wide range of programs are amazing
- Inexpensive
- Infuse technology into Crystal Lake Park District – more active
- Pickle ball
- Encourage IGA use of schools
- Citizen engagement
Issues were identified in workshops with the Executive Steering Committee, Park Board and community. Issues were grouped by theme. The strategic initiative (headline) summarizes the issues to be addressed.

**Foster Intergovernmental and Community Relationships**

**Steering Committee**
- Improved intergovernmental relations and cooperation (not compete against each other, utilize tax dollars effectively - share)
- Expand volunteerism

**Park Board**
- Explore increasing the use of outside vendors for recreation opportunities for the community members
- Streamline Lake Procedures/Rules/Who is in charge
- Better Relationship with the City
- Regain Impact Fees

**Community**
- Continue to improve cooperation between agencies to reduce costs and increase efficiencies
- Communicate with special interest groups and formalize agreements
- Continue partnering with other park districts to increase opportunities
- Continue open discussion forums with residents and be responsive to them
- Partner with other groups such as Willow Creek and YMCA
- Better communication with the residents other than booklet – use social media and other current technologies

**Leader-to-Leader**
- Intergovernmental relations have improved with local leaders meetings
- Ways to develop and strengthen existing partnerships
- Blending of Crystal Lake Park District and school goals
- Joint Crystal Lake Park District/school calendar
- Be bold and do what is needed to provide the services we need to
- Better management of the lake for residents
- Attend each other’s Board meetings
- Provide quarterly use updates
- Easy to work with
- Crystal Lake Park District is focused on solutions
- Crystal Lake Park District is a good partner and has professional leadership
- Expanding relationships and facility use of schools
- Continue local leaders meetings
- Community emergency response plan
- Support each other
Issues were identified in workshops with the Executive Steering Committee, Park Board and community. Issues were grouped by theme. The strategic initiative (headline) summarizes the issues to be addressed.

**Leader-to-Leader (continued)**

- Over communicate what we are doing
- Crystal Lake Park District has a strong community presence
- Crystal Lake Park District has a good reputation
Issues were identified in workshops with the Executive Steering Committee, Park Board and community. Issues were grouped by theme. The strategic initiative (headline) summarizes the issues to be addressed.

Communicating our Message Enhancing our Image

Executive Steering Committee

- Increase public awareness and community involvement through education and awareness.
- Continue to learn and embrace the new technology and use it to the fullest capacity.
- We need to improve communication. There is a disconnect amongst staff, departments with the community and participants.
- Need to use relevant technology
- Branding image – facilities, staff, and marketing materials. (Crystal Lake Park District on every building, staff shirts, marketing material and is the focus)
- Internal communications (work together on decisions and realize impact on each department). Cooperation
- Improve Park District image:
  - Customer service
  - Signage
  - Parks and facilities
- Improve identity in the community
- Technology – alarms, thermostats, locks, Wi-Fi, P-cards, etc.

Park Board

- Improve communication via Social Media (self-promote)

Community

- Spotlight what is available in parks
- Marketing - better way to raise awareness of programs
- Tap into “cultural/multilingual” opportunities
- Use new media – social media, email blast, Facebook, Twitter, Patch
- Increase awareness that Park District is separate from City
- Increase communications to residents

Leader-to-Leader

- Good people at the CRYSTAL LAKE PARK DISTRICT
- Create better awareness
- Be visible in the community – repeat our message
- Crystal Lake Park District offers valuable services
- Crystal Lake Park District is professionally run with a good team of people
Assure Financial Stability

Executive Steering Committee
- Review revenue stream opportunities.
- Limited capital funds available for major capital improvements
- Funding – corporate/private/tax/grants
- Work on budgeting practices.
- Develop forum to discuss process procedures.
- Sponsorships for programs and memberships

Park Board
- Less reliant on tax dollars
- Better established Park Foundation
- Grant Funding
- Provide a link on Website for Donations

Community
- Sustain and maintain what we have first
- Rising tax bills are a concern
- Affordability and creating value to community very important

Leader-to-Leader
- Tax awareness
- Show value in what we provide
- Consolidation items
- Cooperative purchase opportunities – on our own or through the City as part of projects (such as paving) that they have going on
Crystal Lake Park District Issues 2017 - 2022

Issues were identified in workshops with the Executive Steering Committee, Park Board and community. Issues were grouped by theme. The strategic initiative (headline) summarizes the issues to be addressed.

Employee Engagement, Development and Succession Planning

Executive Steering Committee

- Develop an action plan to build morale and establish Crystal Lake Park District University.
- Aim for the same level of customer service internally that we provide externally.
- Succession planning – re-evaluate job responsibilities to relevance – workforce and jobs according to need and relevance.
- Successfully planning for and managing staff transitions

Park Board

- Board appreciates the professionalism and dedication of director and staff

Community

- Youth employment - first job training, preparedness and experience very important
- Think the Crystal Lake Park District does a super job getting as much done as possible with available resources. Thank you

Leader-to-Leader

- Turnover in staff