

Frankfort Square Park District 2021 Strategic Plan Executive Summary

In recent years, the Frankfort Square Park District (FSPD) contracted with independent consultants to conduct and complete its 2017 Community Survey, 2018 Salary Equity Study, 2019 Wellness & Capital Improvement Study, and 2021 Community-Wide Study. Resulting study reports were utilized to help develop a strategic plan while ensuring the plan direction would be guided by those it will serve, the residents of the FSPD.

FSPD's administrators, under the guidance of the Park Board, undertook the strategic planning process that would prioritize the District's goals and objectives.

The strategic planning process was broken into eleven steps, and to date, nine of the eleven steps have been completed with steps 8 and 9 considered as continual process towards completion. Outlined below is an overview of each strategic planning step.

1. Staff meet with independent contractors to discuss development of various surveys.
2. Review previous community-wide surveys and completed objectives.
3. Develop survey instrument drafts and gather FSPD staff and Board input to refine drafts and ensure they present comprehensive studies.
4. Finalize surveys and mail to all households within FSPD borders.
5. Collect and analyze data, prepare survey study documents.
6. Present survey responses and recommendations to the Park Board and residents at Town Hall and publicly-held meetings of the Park Board of Commissioners.
7. Post completed community-wide survey studies to FSPD's website to enable access to all.
8. Conduct seasonal meetings with Department Heads to review survey results and formulate goals and objectives to meet the identified needs of FSPD's residents by ranking them as prioritized strategic initiatives.
9. Implement projects and programming per survey results.
10. Share updated Strategic Plan information on the FSPD website and social media outlet.
11. Review elements of FSPD's strategic plan on an annual basis during a regular Park Board Meeting to ensure goals and objectives are being met, and/or determine if adjustments need to be made to best reflect changing needs.

Strategic Plan Themes

Customer Service

Goal of seeing things from the residents' perspective:

- *Update (Ongoing) – Cross training and open dialog between the Executive Director and staff is part of the fabric of the FSPD, and all understand that the FSPD exists to service its residents. Future Goal: Customer Service Presenter has been identified and will be scheduled for staff training.*
- *Update – Manuals have been developed and provided to all front office clerical staff to enable them to answer resident questions and provide direction on service providers for their particular Village and/or Township that can best meet their needs.*
- *Update – RecTrac, provided by Vermont Systems, Inc. (VSI), the FSPD's main registration software program recently went through a major upgrade. Registration software has also been modified to meet the varied needs of households that include blast email notifications, programming calendars, and payment plans. This is all managed while maintaining the personal touch of well-informed FSPD staff that answer phones and questions on all areas of community life. The FSPD Superintendent of Office Administration and Technology works jointly with VSI representatives and recently upgraded its installment billing process, giving residents the option to render payments for ongoing program offerings in an easy to understand and streamlined process.*

Goal of informing residents' of FSPD offerings:

- *Update: During the pandemic, FSPD provided the tri-annual brochure in a digital format. As Covid guidelines eased and programming made its return, the winter/spring 2022 brochure was able to be printed and mailed to all residents, per their input being the most preferred method.*
- *Update: Regular social media posts were increased to include weekly updates written by the Executive Director ranging from area history, to Covid guidelines, to current projects, and all FSPD has to offer.*
- *Update: Signed agreement with contractor to develop a 2022 marketing plan for FSPD-owned Square Links Golf Course & Driving Range.*

Goal of providing diverse recreation programming:

- *Update: March 2022 – Filled vacant Athletic Supervisor position to generate athletic programming. Conducts regular recreation department meetings to review resident input from community-wide surveys to develop new program opportunities. Cooperates with local agencies to provide additional recreation offerings.*
- *Update: FSPD is bringing back its lakeside Summer Concert Series in the summer of 2022 after cancelling the 2020 and 2021 series due to the pandemic.*

Financial Responsibility

Goal of reviewing and renewing Fund Balance Policy:

- *Update: Per the Fund Balance Policy, the combined unassigned fund balance meets the target of annual expenditures.*
- *Update: Budget meetings are held jointly during bi-monthly staff meetings to ensure staff have a strong understanding of the budget process and flow of revenue versus expenses.*
- *Update: Contracted with Lauterbach & Amen, LLC to develop new system for managing assets.*

Community Cooperation

Goal of supporting community group facility needs:

- *Update: Staff evaluated availability and pricing structures from surrounding communities to update facility and usage procedures.*

Goal of working with local school districts to best utilize facility space for resident use.

- *Update: Met with Lincoln-Way School District 210 Superintendent on 3/2/2022 to discuss ongoing usage of Lincoln-Way North High School.*
- *Update: Meets with Summit Hill School District 161 Superintendent on a monthly basis, most recently 3/3/2022, to discuss ongoing usage of Mary Drew School.*

Goal of working with local Villages and Townships:

- *Update: Met with Village of Frankfort Administrators on 3/10/2022 to continue cooperative effort that will include a new development, connecting FSPD paths to the paved 50 mile Old Plank Road Trail corridor.*

Conservation

Goal of demonstrating leadership in practicing and promoting conservation efforts in the community:

- *Update: Met with local Contractor to plan an addition to the existing boardwalk in FSPD's Island Prairie Park, thereby created a looped pathway around the entire wetland area.*
- *Update: Completed erosion control at all park ponds, maintaining native buffer, employed grass eating carp, and installed the first in a series of pond aeration projects at Community Park pond.*
- *Update: Care and maintenance of natural areas have been and continue to be addressed, with Cardno managing these areas through annual prescribed burns and selective mowing.*
- *Update: In addition to regular and ongoing tree planting efforts throughout the District, staff also formulated a tree planting plan for Square Links Golf Course.*
- *Update: FSPD has established a policy of best practices, and its natural areas improve the community's water quality, minimize nitrogen run-off, and limit the need for herbicide use.*
- *Update: Installed "Geese Gone" lighting, which is 97% effective at eliminating the mess and damage and minimizing unsanitary conditions caused by Canada Geese. This maintenance-free solar lighting is not troubling to people, is environmentally friendly, and is humane to geese.*

Equity

Goal of providing equitable staff compensation:

- *Update: Evaluated part-time pay rates and updated for 2021 and 2022 Illinois minimum wage increases.*

Goal of expanding efforts to support residents in need:

- *Update: Raised funds to enable the awarding of nine \$1,000 college scholarships in 2022, adding to the existing \$130,000 awarded to 130 graduating high school seniors since 2007.*

Goal of supporting Lincolnway Special Recreation Association's efforts to serve individuals of all abilities:

- *Update: Provided additional funding in support of LWSRA's construction of a universal design playground, adjacent to its recreation center.*
- *Update: Currently supporting LWSRA efforts by hosting golf and track and field events, North American Wheelchair Basketball League Championship, and providing programming space for its adult summer camp.*

Goal of developing facilities that are accessible for all:

- *Update: Interviewing landscape architects to begin the OSLAD grant process to add community gardens at Hunter Prairie Park.*

Conclusion

The FSPD's Strategic Plan identified five themes along with goals and objectives that will be addressed to ensure all are met, in order to improve the quality of life throughout the Frankfort Square Park District community.