

# Strategic Plan 2024 - 2028

## 1

### **Champion issues related to environmental sustainability.**

**Outcome:** The Vernon Hills community will look to the Park District as a leader on issues related to environmental sustainability and conservation.

**Strategies:**

- Develop a community-based environmental and sustainability commission as it relates to the District's mission, convening residents, businesses, schools, and community organization stakeholders.
- Further the Park District's expertise as a steward of open land and public green spaces.
- Identify and pursue methods to increase staff capacity to oversee this work.
- Develop and implement marketing strategies to share progress with the public.

## 2

### **Be the community's first choice destination for outdoor and recreational activities.**

**Outcome:** The Vernon Hills Park District will provide parks, facilities, programs, resources, and services that are responsive to community demand.

**Strategies:**

- Expand and deepen untapped programming for active adults.
- Increase cultural programming, with guidance from community members.
- Develop outdoor education and nature programs.
- Expand informal programming that provides opportunity for social and community connectedness.
- Develop a structured volunteer program.
- Explore the feasibility of a dog park.
- Increase passive opportunities for engaging with the Park District, such as providing interpretative signage.

### 3

## **Implement a comprehensive fundraising strategy that increases financial support for the Park District's mission.**

**Outcome:** The Vernon Hills Park District will secure funding that supports the long-term sustainability of its resources, programs, and services.

### **Strategies:**

- Evaluate the effectiveness of current revenue generation through programs and services and increase participation.
- Pursue ways to increase revenue from community events.
- Explore and pursue alternative revenue generation, such as interest income and investment income.
- Increase support received through sponsorships and grants.

### 4

## **Increase community engagement and awareness of the Park District's parks, facilities, programs, resources, and services.**

**Outcome:** Residents and local organizations will be aware of and supportive of the Park District's value to the community.

### **Strategies:**

- Expand the involvement and impact of community advocates.
- Launch a focused and engaged Park Advisory Committee.
- Increase opportunities for community engagement, such as park chats, table talks with Park Commissioners, and event committees.
- Improve the functionality of the Park District website.
- Increase staff visibility in the community through social media and other engagement opportunities.

## 5

### **Foster a supportive and inclusive workplace culture that enables staff to thrive.**

**Outcome:** The Vernon Hills Park District will attract and retain high-quality staff who feel appreciated and valued.

**Strategies:**

- Invest in staff by providing the training, development, and tools they need to succeed.
- Conduct job task analysis to identify efficiencies and opportunities for growth.
- Identify and pursue ways to attract more staff candidates who reflect the diversity of the community the Park District serves.
- Establish regular engagement practices with part-time staff, such as stay interviews and surveys.
- Build a pipeline of future full-time staff and park commissioners.
- Identify and pursue ways to encourage staff wellness.