



BARTLETT PARK DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN



Letter From Executive Director

Dear Bartlett Park District Community,

On behalf of Bartlett Park District team members and the Park Board of Commissioners, I am proud to present our updated Strategic Plan, a culmination of many months of hard work and collaboration. This five-year plan is a testament to our collective commitment to addressing the evolving needs of our community, doing what the situation calls for and ensuring the ongoing success of Bartlett Park District.

The strategic planning process provided us with a valuable opportunity to reflect on our strengths, analyze community needs, and set a clear direction for the future. Our new plan is built around four key strategic themes: Community Engagement, Financial Focus, Operational Excellence and Employee Engagement. These four themes will provide team members with strategic direction and a structured approach to implementing short-, mid-, and long-term initiatives, all designed to support the District's mission: We Create Fun by providing exceptional parks, programs and facilities for our community.

This plan is more than just a document; it is our roadmap for the next five years. It will serve as our guide as we make decisions, allocate resources, and measure our progress towards achieving our vision to inspire our community to discover the extraordinary, dream what is possible and create memorable experiences. We are incredibly excited about the opportunities ahead and believe this Strategic Plan will enable us to make an even greater impact on our community.

I am profoundly grateful to everyone involved in creating this Strategic Plan and for your ongoing dedication to making this plan a success. Together, we commit to living our values while advancing our shared vision and achieving our mission.

Sincerely,

Kevin R. Romejko

Kevin R. Romejko, MBA
Executive Director





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Acknowledgement

Bartlett Park District (District) extends its gratitude to community members, partners, the board, and staff for their contributions to the planning process for the District's future. The successful development of this plan is a direct result of the commitment and collaboration demonstrated by all participants.

Park Board of Commissioners

- **Stephen M. Eckelberry**, President
- **Lori A. Palmer**, Vice President
- **Diana Gunsteen**, Treasurer
- **Susan M. Stocks**
- **Dale Ann Kasuba**
- **Jody Fagan**
- **Nathan Botkin**

Leadership Team

- **Kevin Romejko**, Executive Director
- **Kimberly Dasbach**, Superintendent of Recreation
- **Eric Leninger**, Superintendent of Business Service
- **Katie Mix**, Superintendent of Special Facilities
- **Kelly O'Brien**, Superintendent of Parks and Planning
- **Bobby Pierobon**, Superintendent of Villa Olivia

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- **Maureen Carter**, Executive Assistant
- **Natalie Reed**, Aquatics Manager
- **Catalina Rodelo**, Human Resources Manager

Focus Group Participants

- **Bartlett Park District Staff**
- **Bartlett Public Library**
- **Bartlett Fire District**
- **Bartlett Police Department**
- **U-46 School District**
- **Hanover Township**
- **Bartlett Rotary**
- **Bartlett Parks Foundation**
- **Bartlett Chamber of Commerce**
- **Northwest Special Recreation Association**

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Introduction

Offering a wide array of programs, facilities, and activities in the northwestern suburbs of Chicago, Bartlett Park District is a recognized treasure to the over 40,000 community members it serves. The District boasts signature assets such as Bartlett Community Center, Villa Olivia Events, Golf and Winter Sports Facility, Apple Orchard Golf Course, Bartlett Nature Center, Bartlett Aquatic Center, and over 40 parks, contributing 577 acres of greenspace throughout the village of Bartlett.

In early 2025, the District—a distinguished agency by the Illinois Association of Park Districts—embarked on a remarkable endeavor: updating both its strategic and master plans. At the time, the District was already recognized for keeping an eye on the future, but the recently appointed executive director wanted to start his tenure with a fresh perspective and understanding of the District. The process began with gathering feedback from the board, staff, municipal partners, and community groups. The District held eight focus groups and a workshop for the board that helped identify strengths and areas of opportunity for the agency. Additionally, the District distributed an employee culture and operations survey that focused on:

- Leadership
- Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management
- Operations
- Results
- Supervision
- Workforce
- Workplace Culture

A total of 91 staff—30 full-time, 50 part-time, and 11 seasonal employees—participated in the survey.

Insights gained from discussions and the survey revealed a positive culture and supportive system that also faces challenges of having enough staff and keeping up with outdated equipment and systems that are costly to replace and maintain. This data also helped form the development of a mission statement, vision statement, and values.

Led jointly by leadership and a strategic planning team that represented departments throughout the District, the team met several times to draft new statements and identify key themes and objectives to guide the Strategic Plan. The process concluded with an implementation workshop and the creation of an action plan where leadership identified short-, mid-, and long-term initiatives.



District Mission

Previous Mission:

"We Create Fun!....by providing the finest in Parks, Programs, and Recreational Facilities for our community."

New Mission:

"We Create Fun by providing exceptional parks, programs and facilities for our community."

District Vision

Previous Vision:

"We strive to create lasting memories for our community by enthusiastically responding to and serving their recreational and leisure needs."

New Vision:

"To inspire our community to discover the extraordinary, dream what is possible and create memorable experiences."

District Values

Accountability

Belonging

Fun

Innovation

Integrity

Teamwork



The Balanced Scorecard

The District's Strategic Plan was developed using the Balanced Scorecard framework, which emphasizes the interdependent cause-and-effect relationships among core perspectives: customers, financial, internal support processes, and learning and growth. This approach focuses on fundamental success factors essential for advancing the District's mission and vision.



The Balanced Scorecard framework includes four themes:

- **Customer:** To achieve our mission and vision, how should we seek to meet our customers' needs?
- **Financial:** To succeed financially, how do we show evidence of our financial stewardship to our customers?
- **Internal Support:** To satisfy our customers, which business practices must we do extremely well?
- **Learning and Growth:** To achieve our mission and vision, how will we sustain our ability to change and improve, as well as develop leaders among the staff?



Theme elements are outlined more specifically below:



Customer Perspective

- Customer value
- Customer recruitment and retention
- Quality of services
- Service delivery (access mechanisms, customer requirements, and image)
- Partnerships
- Brand and image



Financial Perspective

- Cost reduction
- Efficiency
- Revenue growth and mix
- Percentage of tax support
- Productivity



Internal Perspective

- Business operations
- Customer management processes (support systems and use of technology)
- Innovation processes
- Regulatory and social processes (safety, environmental)



Learning and Growth Perspective

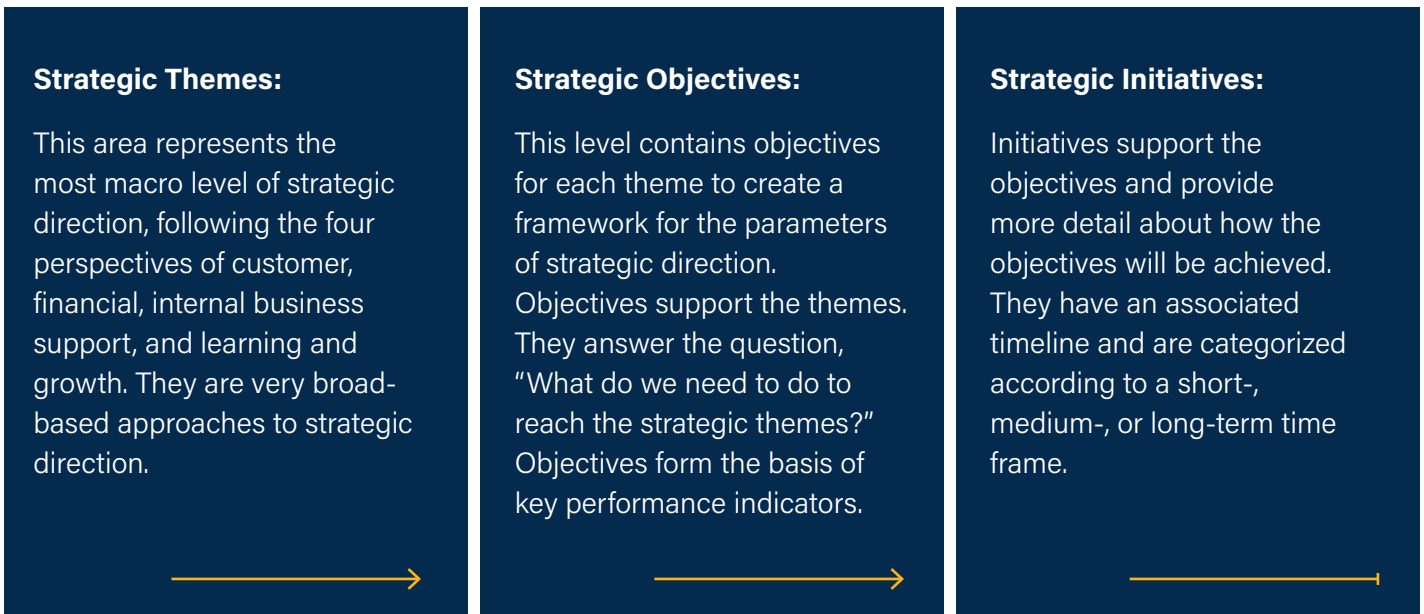
- Employee capabilities
- Information capital (management of organizational knowledge)
- Organization capital (motivation, empowerment, alignment)

Strategic Plan Hierarchy

The District's Strategic Plan is organized according to a structured hierarchy that begins with broad, high-level strategies and advances toward more detailed, tactical components. The process encompasses:

- Reviewing the mission, vision, and values
- Establishing strategic themes and objectives
- Formulating strategic initiatives

Each subsequent layer further defines the framework supporting the four overarching themes, as illustrated in the accompanying graphic.



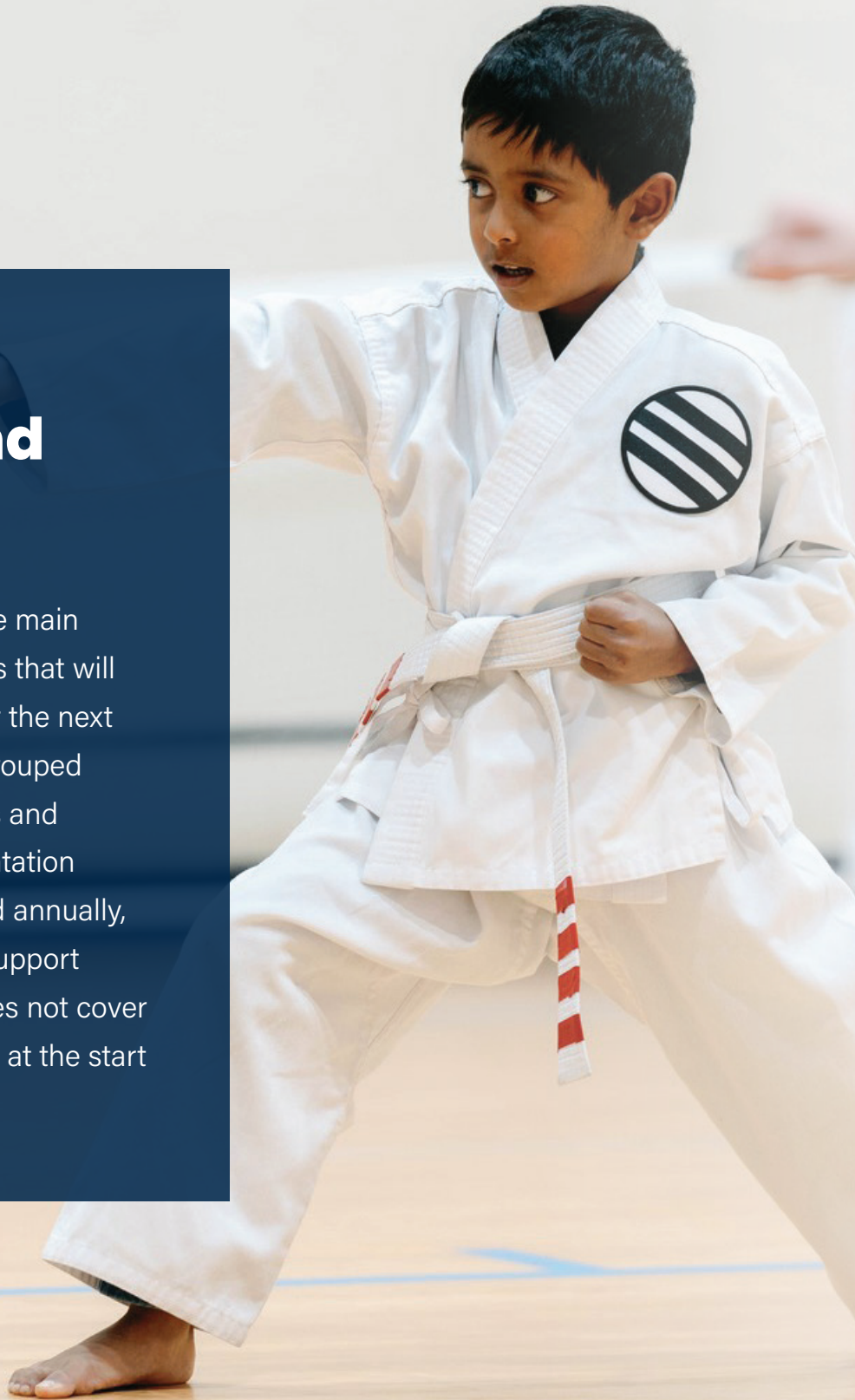


The District's Strategy Map

Community Engagement		
Strengthen Partnerships	Provide High Quality Experiences	Increase Brand Awareness
Financial Focus		
Encourage Innovative Planning	Drive Operational Efficiency	Diversify Revenue Sources
Operational Excellence		
Encourage Collaboration	Drive Innovation	Streamline Processes
Employee Engagement		
Foster Positive Culture	Empower Employees	Support Professional Growth and Recognition

Themes, Objectives, and Initiatives

The following section outlines the main themes, objectives, and initiatives that will direct the District's activities over the next five years. These initiatives are grouped based on the established themes and objectives to create an implementation framework. They will be reviewed annually, and staff will develop tactics to support execution. The Strategic Plan does not cover tactics, as they will be developed at the start of each relevant initiative.





Customer: Community Engagement

Strengthen Partnerships	Provide High Quality Experiences	Increase Brand Awareness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize key partners to strengthen the District’s ability to offer services Increase the District’s impact by strengthening its volunteer recruitment, training, and retention plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement District-wide standards to enhance the guest experience Develop key performance indicators (KPIs) that measure customer satisfaction and loyalty Develop review processes to communicate current customer satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reevaluate and improve external communication Strengthen brand awareness and increase public awareness and recognition



Financial: Financial Focus

Encourage Innovative Planning	Drive Operational Efficiency	Diversify Revenue Sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for long-term resiliency through operating, maintenance, and capital improvement plan (CIP) budgets Leverage resources to maximize community value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide financial education resources for team members Conduct a Cost of Service analysis to evaluate current pricing structure Conduct an operational analysis to identify opportunities to increase efficiencies and reduce costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate grant and donor opportunities into long-term planning Maximize alternate revenue sources



Internal Business Support: Operational Excellence

Encourage Collaboration	Drive Innovation	Streamline Processes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluate and improve internal communication standards ▪ Strengthen interdepartmental relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assess existing level of innovation throughout the District and identify ways to operationalize innovation ▪ Ensure systems are in place to recognize innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a strategic framework to evaluate, align, and ensure processes are designed to support District priorities and operational excellence ▪ Improve workflow systems District-wide to create a continuity of service



Employee Learning and Growth: Employee Engagement

Foster Positive Culture	Empower Employees	Support Professional Growth and Recognition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capitalize on opportunities to understand and improve the employee experience ▪ Maintain a healthy culture by promoting District-wide values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build a solid foundation through consistent training, development, and empowerment ▪ Improve team member access to information by identifying knowledge sharing opportunities and establishing communication protocols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invest and foster opportunities for consistent employee support, development, and advancement ▪ Increase recognition of team members externally and internally

Initiatives

To help develop an achievable plan, District leadership divided the initiatives into three phases:

- **Short-Term:** Over the two years
- **Mid-Term:** Within three-four years
- **Long-Term:** Greater than five years

	Short 1 - 2 Years	Mid 3 - 4 Years	Long 5+ Years
Community Engagement			
Strengthen Partnerships			
Utilize key partners to strengthen the District’s ability to offer services		X	
Increase the District’s impact by strengthening its volunteer recruitment, training, and retention plan			X
Provide High Quality Experiences			
Develop and implement District-wide standards to enhance the guest experience	X		
Develop key performance indicators (KPIs) that measure customer satisfaction and loyalty		X	
Develop review processes to communicate current customer satisfaction	X		
Increase Brand Awareness			
Reevaluate and improve external communication		X	
Strengthen brand awareness and increase public awareness and recognition	X		



	Short 1 - 2 Years	Mid 3 - 4 Years	Long 5+ Years
Financial Focus			
Encourage Innovative Planning			
Plan for long-term resiliency through operating, maintenance, and capital improvement plan (CIP) budgets			X
Leverage resources to maximize community value		X	
Drive Operational Efficiency			
Provide financial education resources for team members	X		
Conduct a Cost of Service analysis to evaluate current pricing structure		X	
Conduct an operational analysis to identify opportunities to increase efficiencies and reduce costs		X	
Diversify Revenue Sources			
Incorporate grant and donor opportunities into long-term planning			X
Maximize alternate revenue sources			X



	Short 1 - 2 Years	Mid 3 - 4 Years	Long 5+ Years
Operational Excellence			
Encourage Collaboration			
Evaluate and improve internal communication standards	X		
Strengthen interdepartmental relationships		X	
Drive Innovation			
Assess existing level of innovation throughout the District and identify ways to operationalize innovation			X
Ensure systems are in place to recognize innovation			X
Streamline Processes			
Develop a strategic framework to evaluate, align, and ensure processes are designed to support District priorities and operational excellence		X	
Improve workflow systems District-wide to create a continuity of service	X		



	Short 1 - 2 Years	Mid 3 - 4 Years	Long 5+ Years
Employee Engagement			
Foster Positive Culture			
Capitalize on opportunities to understand and improve the employee experience		X	
Maintain a healthy culture by promoting District-wide values	X		
Empower Employees			
Build a solid foundation through consistent training, development and empowerment	X		
Improve team member access to information by identifying knowledge sharing opportunities and establishing communication protocols		X	
Support Professional Growth and Recognition			
Invest and foster opportunities for consistent employee support, development and advancement			X
Increase recognition of team members externally and internally	X		

Putting the Plan Into Action

For the Strategic Plan to be successful, it must be integrated into daily operations. The District will achieve its goals by doing the following:

Using the Strategic Plan as a decision-making framework:

The plan will serve as a reference point when making decisions or responding to new challenges, helping determine if new priorities outweigh those already established.

Incorporating the Strategic Plan into employee onboarding:

Introducing the plan during onboarding reinforces its significance and highlights accountability as a core value.

Designating plan champions:

Assign at least one staff member to monitor progress and integrate the plan into daily operations. Each strategic initiative should have a dedicated leader and team to foster accountability.

Regularly reporting on progress:

Break the plan into annual segments, reporting on one year at a time. Each year's initiatives should include supporting tactics, developed by staff and tracked in a system listing themes, objectives, start and completion dates, and responsible personnel.

Monitoring measures on a quarterly basis:

Assess progress quarterly and provide an annual summary of results. Regularly review and adjust performance measures to ensure their continued relevance in decision-making.

Conducting annual Strategic Plan reviews:

At the end of each year, review the plan, document any necessary changes, and integrate the discussion into an annual meeting, aligning with the budget planning process.

Aligning performance evaluations with District values:

Performance appraisals should reflect the successful completion of strategic initiatives as a key evaluation criterion.

Tracking and assessing new strategic ideas:

Continuously document potential new strategies and periodically evaluate their relevance, considering whether they should replace existing initiatives.





Conclusion

The Bartlett Park District Strategic Plan represents a collaborative and forward-thinking roadmap designed to guide the District’s growth and service to the community over the next five years. Rooted in a refreshed mission and vision, and shaped by input from staff, leadership, partners, and residents, the plan leverages the Balanced Scorecard framework to ensure a holistic approach to organizational success. By focusing on four strategic themes—Community Engagement, Financial Focus, Operational Excellence, and Employee Engagement—the District is committed to strengthening partnerships, enhancing experiences, ensuring financial stewardship, and fostering a positive workplace culture.

Implementation will be driven by clear objectives and phased initiatives, with accountability built into daily operations and regular progress reviews. As the District moves forward, this plan will serve as a living document—guiding decisions, prioritizing investments, and aligning efforts to deliver exceptional parks, programs, and services that reflect the aspirations of Bartlett’s residents. Through ongoing evaluation and adaptation, the District will continue to create memorable experiences and inspire the community to discover the extraordinary and dream what is possible.

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