Park Forest
Live Grow Discover

2022 Strategic Goals

Village of Park Forest 2022 Strategic Goals

Prepared by B2B Strategic Solutions Inc.

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January 19, 2022

To the Residents of Park Forest,

It is with a humble heart that I share with you the vision for the future of Park Forest. After almost two years of work, B2B Strategic Solutions has guided the Village Board through this endeavor. Staff helped gather thousands of resident surveys from mail-in responses to internet responses. Over 50 residents took part in multiple focus group discussions to share ideas and goals. B2B Strategic Solutions then was able to process and compile the data for the Board to review.

After receipt of all stakeholder analysis, the Board was then able to review the data and come up with seven categories to consider for the development of goals:

- Economic Development and Stewardship
- Infrastructure and Sustainability
- Health and Safety
- Marketing and Communications
- Community Engagement
- Preservation of Culture and Arts
- Ethical and Transparent Governance

The Board then took the overall categories that were important to you, the residents, and deliberated extensively to create eight strategic planning goals for the next three to five years as we move Park Forest forward. These goals are as follows:

1. To strengthen and enhance economic conditions to attract and retain businesses and employers to support a thriving local economy.
2. To provide municipal services in a responsive and fiscally sustainable manner through continued collaboration, innovation and regional leadership.
3. To employ best practices to deliver high quality services, maintain and develop infrastructure in an environmentally and fiscally sustainable manner.
4. To mitigate effects of climate changes through management of Village resources, partnerships and natural environment.

5. To continue to ensure the health, welfare and safety of Village residents and property through the provision of excellent and innovative public safety services delivered with integrity and impartiality.
6. To increase opportunities for engagement and maximize resources for all residents.
7. To continue to develop public relations and innovative marketing and communications to promote Park Forest.
8. To build upon the history of Park Forest and cultivate a culture that meets the future needs of the community.

Congratulations, and thank you again, to all residents that responded to the survey. Thank you to all the residents who took part in the focus groups. Thank you to staff for helping to collect the data. Lastly, thank you to my fellow Board members for their dedication to our community.

Park Forest has faced many trials and tribulations these past 30 years but now is the time to change our trajectory.

"When you get into a tight place and everything goes against you … never give up then, for that is just the place and time that the tide will turn."
--Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896), American abolitionist and author

Sincerely,

Jonathan M. Vanderbilt

Jonathan Vanderbilt, Mayor

January 12, 2022

Mayor Jonathan Vanderbilt & Board of Trustees:

Serving as an elected official is an immensely important role. The obligations are many in serving the citizenry of Park Forest. Critical functions include being stewards of the public trust and careful consideration to the allocation of municipal resources. With an elected body comprised of seven diverse perspectives, it is imperative to establish cohesion in serving the needs of nearly 22,000 residents. In his book, *Good to Great*, author Jim Collins wrote of high performing organizations driven by a culture of discipline. Self-disciplined people typically define organizations that achieve sustained success. These individuals are engaged in disciplined thought while taking disciplined actions toward disciplined results.

A hallmark of good governance and disciplined thought is the development of strategic plans. The Village of Park Forest recently undertook its latest strategic visioning efforts. The Mayor and Board of Trustees are self-disciplined in their approaches. Steps in this recent process took place to foster disciplined thought and well-informed discussion. Over the past two years, information gathering provided the Board with substantial insights from various community stakeholders. This included a comprehensive community survey, resulting in feedback from nearly 1,500 households in Park Forest. Insights were also gathered through several citizen and staff focus groups.

All of the work noted above was the outcome of a collaborative approach between the Management Staff and representatives from B2B Strategic Solutions. The data generated for Board review came from coordinated actions between Village Staff and the consultants. Careful review of data provided the Mayor and Board with an informed perspective as it convened over the past few months to develop eight strategic goals. Through thorough discussion and established consensus, these goals will serve as a guide for the coming 3 to 5 years. The Management Staff looks forward to developing strategies toward achieving success with each established goal.

Sincerely,

Thomas K. Mick
Village Manager

Village of Park Forest
Board of Trustees

Mayor and President
Jonathan Vanderbilt

Trustee
Tiffani Graham

Trustee
Maya Hardy

Trustee
Candyce Herron

Trustee
Theresa Settles

Trustee
Erin Slone

Trustee
Joseph Woods

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Village of Park Forest Management Staff

Tom Mick, Village Manager

Director of Recreation, Parks and Community Health
Rob Gunther

IT Administrator
Craig Kaufman

Director of Community Development
Larrie Kerestes

Director of Economic Development & Planning
Hildy Kingma

Police Chief
Christopher Mannino

Human Resources Director
Jason Miller

Fire Chief
Tracy Natyshok

Deputy Village Manager/Finance Director
Mark Pries

Director of Public Works
Roderick Ysaguirre

Community Focus Group Nominees

Public participation was a critical element in the Strategic Goals development process. The following community members, business owners, and Village residents were nominated to participate in the workshops, visioning sessions, and community discussions.

Katharine Baker

Margaret Banks

Chriselda Bell William

Bright Sharon

Creamean Diana Cruz

Georgia Eldieb

Kim Elmore-Perkins

Dan Graham

Denise Harvey Williams

Andra Hendricks

Mary Kay Joens

Daniel Karwatka

Crystal Kennedy- Perkins

Jason Long

Francis Mangum

Lori Snodgrass Mitchell

GiGi Moore

John Moore

Jane Nichols

Valerie Nicholson

Pheadra Richardson

Erin Skelly

Sandra Slone

Andrew Stevens

LaVonna Swiley

Vernice Warren

Ashley Zamot

BACKGROUND

Village of Park Forest Overview

The Village of Park Forest has a nearly 75-year history of innovation and blazing trails. In 1948, Park Forest was the first post-war planned community in the United States with a vision to provide housing for GIs returning from World War II.

Since that time, the Village of Park Forest has received numerous accolades for its land use plan, livability scores, and employment indicators. The Village's innovative design has been recognized and used as a model for towns throughout the world.

Among other awards, Park Forest boasts the largest per capita acres of parks, woods, and open space in the state of Illinois. The Village also has a thriving commitment to the arts.

Purpose of Strategic Goals Development

The desire for diversity, cultural expression, and inclusiveness have made the Village of Park Forest a shining star amongst other townships and small cities in the region and nation and has allowed the Village to earn numerous national and regional awards throughout the years. Additionally, the Village is in a prime position to benefit from national funding and interest in infrastructure, affordable housing, and diversity initiatives from the Federal government and private interests.

The purpose of this document is to identify strategic goals for the Village of Park Forest that will aid, support, and foster development for the nearly 22,000 residents of the Village and will lead to solutions to attract and retain new individuals, families, and business opportunities.

The goals developed are designed to take advantage of and strengthen the rich heritage of the Village. From this document, strategies and actionable plans may be designed that will enhance the current and future legacy of the Village of Park Forest.

STRATEGIC GOALS DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Planning for the development of the strategic goals began in January 2020. A series of strategy meetings were held with the leadership and Board of the Village of Park Forest to begin the process.

The project was divided into four stages to ensure proper completion.

Phase I Initiation Planning and Discovery
The purpose of the first phase was to align and refine the project and communication plans with the executive team and determine the engagement plan for community support and involvement. Internal and external tools methods for data collection were developed,

Phase II Design Development and Observations
The next phase of the planning process included reviewing existing documentation, preparing and conducting evaluations, assessments and reports related to the Village missions and previous goals. The start of the COVID pandemic delayed the project temporarily during phase two; however, evaluations and planning continued.

When safe to resume, another series of strategy sessions was conducted with the leadership team and the community engagement plan scheduling began.

Phase III Observations and Analysis
In this phase, there was a thorough review of the previous sessions with community constituents and leadership team. Priorities of feedback were created and distributed based on the reviews.

Phase IV Strategic Plan Development and Debriefing
During the final phase, key findings and recommendations were prioritized along with the top eight SMART Goals. A strategic plan road map was created to help the leadership team in implementation and budget planning. The final report was prepared and submitted to the board for review and acceptance.

Methodology and Approach

The Village of Park Forest undertook this strategic planning process in order to document the Village's intended direction and to provide a roadmap for future success based on the goals identified.

The methodology used was designed to prioritize efforts, effectively allocate resources, align shareholders on organizational goals, and ensure the desired goals are backed by data and sound reasoning.

A series of meetings (both in-person and online) were held between the Village Leadership/Management Team and residents of the community that comprised the Community Focus Group. The purpose of the meetings were to foster intent and develop agile and executable strategic goals.

Both groups wanted to create a "forward-focused" vision that aligned with the objectives determined by the community, Village management, and Village Board.

Two models were used in the Village's strategic goal development process- the **SWOT Analysis** and the **PESTLE Analysis**.

SWOT Analysis Overview

The primary purpose of the **SWOT Analysis** is to provide a framework to identify factors that impacted the Village's internal functions and operations and offer other useful information during the strategic planning process. The **SWOT Analysis** is designed to facilitate a realistic, fact-based, data-driven look at the strengths and weaknesses of the Village. It also served as a guide that was used to provide more careful and informed decision making during the planning process.

SWOT stands for:
Strengths: These are the Village's best qualities and the ways they affect the Village reputation and image.

Weaknesses: These indicate areas in the Village that could benefit from improvement in order to deliver better services.

Opportunities: These are changes or developments that can positively affect the Village.

Threats: This refers to the changes or developments that can negatively affect the Village, such as strict legal mandates or drastic changes in population.

The benefit of the **SWOT Analysis** is its ability to identify conditions that exists both internally and externally and allows for the formulation of plans to convert weaknesses into strengths, minimize threats, and take advantage of opportunities in the future.

Methodology and Approach

PESTLE Analysis Overview

The **PESTLE Analysis** was an additional strategic goal setting tool used during this process. The primary purpose of the **PESTLE Analysis** is to develop a profound understanding of the external environment where the Village operates. Usually, the **PESTLE Analysis** is conducted with a SWOT Analysis because of its focus on external factors that affect the environment for an organization.

PESTLE stands for:

Political: factors include tax policy, regulation, governmental stability, elections, rule of law, levels of political influence, processes, and potential changes via new legislation or disruptions in the political environment.

Economic: factors include the overall economic cycle, potential for economic growth or contraction, interest rates and inflation, labor costs and labor supply, unemployment rates, impact of globalization on the economy, levels of disposable income and income distribution.

Social: factors include the demographic characteristics and attitudes of the local and surrounding population. In reference to the population, consideration is given to whether the population is aging, becoming more youthful, growing, or being stagnant. Other factors for consideration include- health, education, social mobility, cultural aspects, perceptions, and the conditions in society.

Technology: factors include emerging technologies, job automation, the rate of technological change, and the impact of how people live and work in the Village. Some specific examples include: examining an increase in remote working, fluctuations in communication costs, improved infrastructure, and the rising demand for new technology products to name a few.

Legal: factors include the laws and legal framework that affect the Village's environment. Some examples are health and safety laws, labor laws, consumer laws and, election laws.

Environmental: factors are any of the trends or impacts on the environment such as natural disasters, climate change, environmental regulations, and the rising demand for eco-friendly and "green" products.

The benefit of the **PESTLE Analysis** is it provides a more comprehensive version of the SWOT analysis by asking detailed questions. This aids in determining the future scope of action and in developing measures for strategic management.

Methodology and Approach

Additional Input into the Strategic Planning Process

In addition to using the models above, both participating groups examined and discussed other common Village elements such as:

- The existing vision, mission, goals and objectives
- Identification of core values
- The current and previous action plans

The end result of the strategic goal setting process was to generate input from both groups (Village Leadership/Management Team and the Community) and provide the Village Board with recommendations for top-level goals.

The SMART Goal Setting Overview

Several strategic goal setting sessions were conducted with the Village Board to review and comment on information from the previous sessions with both the Community Focus Group and the Leadership/Management Team.

The ultimate goal of these review sessions were to receive input from both groups so the Village Board would begin to plan and establish several Village Goals for the upcoming years.

The **SMART Goal Setting** Methodology was used by the Board to help guide the goal setting process.

SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely.

Specific: The goal is to identify a specific action or event that will take place. The intent is to make sure that the goal is specific and concrete. The major question we wanted to address is- What exactly does the Board want to accomplish?

Measurable: The goal and its benefits should be quantifiable. The intent is to make sure the Village Board can measure and track progress. The major question we wanted to address is- How will the Board know when this goal has been accomplished?

Achievable: The goal should be attainable given available resources. The intent is to make sure the goal is realistic and within reach. The major questions we wanted to address are- (1) Is achieving this goal realistic with effort and commitment? (2) Does the Village have the resources to achieve this goal?

Relevant: The goal should require the organization to stretch some, but also allow the likelihood of success. The intent is to make sure the goal is important and meaningful. The major question we wanted to address is- Why is this goal significant to the Board?

Timely: The goal should state the time period in which it will be accomplished. The intent is realistic deadlines are set that will allow the Board to be accountable and stay on track. The major question we wanted to address is- When is this goal to be achieved?

Management of the Strategic Plan

After formulation of the strategic goals, Village Management should begin developing implementation plans which would define key actions items with desired outcomes and deadlines needed to fulfil the identified goals.

The implementation plan would typically include (1) determining the impact of the proposed strategy and identified goals on Village resources to include budget, staffing, equipment, and other relevant factors and (2) determining key performance indicators the management team will track to monitor the progress against actions on an ongoing basis.

It is important to note, all three groups involved in the strategic goal setting process- the Community Focus Group, the Leadership Team, and the Village Board agreed the Village's strategic planning process should be an ongoing event rather than a one-time occurrence.

The results of the SWOT and PESTLE analyses are summarized on the following pages.

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SWOT ANALYSIS
HIGHLIGHTS
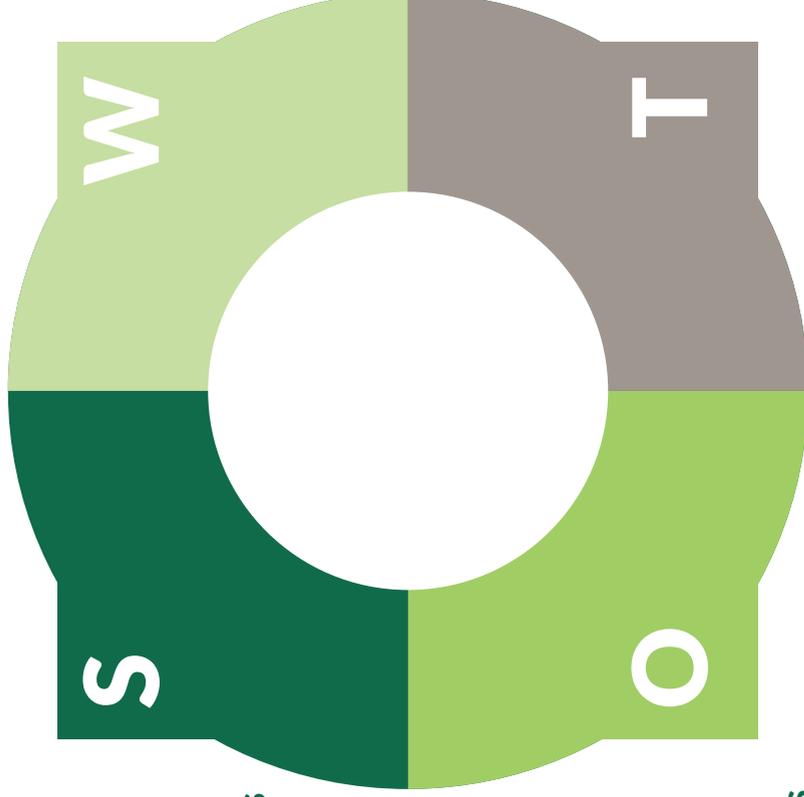
STRENGTHS

- THE OVERALL DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF THE VILLAGE
- THE ABILITY TO GET GRANTS
- QUALITY OF SERVICES TO RESIDENTS
- DIVERSITY
- QUALITY VILLAGE AMENITIES
- LOCATION
- AFFORDABILITY IN HOUSING
- A PROACTIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

WEAKNESSES

- LANDLOCKED
- PROPERTY TAXES
- AGING COMMUNITY
- LOW PROPERTY VALUES
- CHALLENGED PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
- LACK OF RETAIL AND OTHER PERTINENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES
- CRIME AND SAFETY

OPPORTUNITIES

- COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- LARGE INVESTMENT IN INFRASRUCTURE, DIVESITY, AND CULTURAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
- RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITES WITH LOCAL, REGIONAL, NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS, AND AGENCIES

THREATS

- COMPETITION FOR FUNDING WITH OTHER MUNICIPALITIES
- LITIGIOUS NATURE OF SOCIETY
- ADVERSE POLITICAL CHANGES
- UNCERTAINTY OF COVID

This is an abridged version of the SWOT Analysis.

P

Political

POLITICAL QUESTIONS - Asked to Leadership/ Management Team and Community Focus Group

1. What is happening politically in the environment in which the Village operates?
2. What is the tax policy?
3. Are there any political/legal restrictions, rules, or regulations that may affect the process of Village business?

POLITICAL FACTORS - Expressed by Village groups

- Changing of political thought in the country - partisan political environment
- Tax structure - county/state tax structure (impact on south suburbs)
- Competing interests of surrounding communities
- General political dysfunction
- State mandates
- Legislation /changes in legislation

- General lack of (term limits, education in public schools, county system failures)
- Lack of civility in elections / divisiveness / "Chicago style politics"
- Importance of non-partisan politics
- Village infrastructure (water, sewer, roads)
- Taxes (e.g. differences in housing, unfair in southern suburbs, tax dollars as a result of schools)
- Collaboration with neighboring villages

E

Economic

ECONOMIC Questions- Asked to Leadership/ Management Team and Community Focus Group

1. How are the economic conditions in the area, surrounding communities, and in the region?
2. How could these conditions (unemployment, inflation, business development, wages, etc.) affect the Village?
3. Is the economy stable, unstable, or growing in the Village, surrounding community, and the region?

ECONOMIC FACTORS- Expressed by Village groups

- Overall national economy (e.g. cost of living, wage rates, inflation, etc.)
- Employment and unemployment factors due to the pandemic
- Tax revenue (timing of payments from the State)
- Need for highway development
- International investment

- Impact on local government infrastructure
- Maintaining and improving infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, broadband)
- Continue to attract businesses (e.g. cannabis, agritourism, small business, manufacturing)
- Tax structure (how they can be lowered for homeowners and the effect on business)
- Continued fiscal and communication responsibility of Village management (i.e. pandemic keeping citizens informed)

S
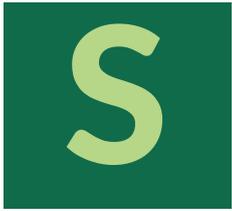
Sociological

SOCIOLOGICAL QUESTIONS - Asked to Leadership/ Management Team and Community Focus Group

1. What is occurring socially within the Village, surrounding community, the region?
2. Who is in the Village and how could age distribution affect the community?
3. How are citizens/residents opinions changing regarding services offered by the Village?

SOCIOLOGICAL FACTORS - Expressed by Village groups

- Demographics (age, sex / acceptance of expansion of sexual norms, cultural, and racial diversity)
- Overall change in demographics (population growth in some areas, decline in others)
- Overall change of "societal norms" (e.g., lack of desire to work, changing values, etc.)
- Effects of the pandemic
- Public safety

- Schools (education) - funding
- Social media influence
- Importance of education in Village (e.g., meet the needs of students, poor performance of school system)
- Village collaboration with neighboring villages
- Addressing the needs of both older and younger residents (i.e., services for elderly, programs for youth)

T

Technological

TECHNOLOGICAL QUESTIONS - Asked to Leadership/ Management Team and Community Focus Group

1. What technology is critical for day-to-day operations?
2. What impact does technology have in the Village?
3. What is the level of technological awareness of the residents?
4. Does the Village have the necessary infrastructure to support growth?

TECHNOLOGICAL FACTORS - Expressed by Village groups

- Influence of technology (e.g., health care, affect on human interaction)
- Social media
- Fast pace of changing technology
- Building out infrastructure
- Use of technology (e.g., by seniors, by youth, new skills, etc.)
- Investments in new technology
- Learning or finding new skills
- Negatives of technology

- Access (e.g. too much/ not enough)
- Ongoing review/audit of Village technology needs for continued growth
- Continue to improve communications on various channels/platforms
- Apply "green technology" to Village operations- fund through grants for renewable energy
- Increase broadband capabilities in the Village (e.g., impact on residents and education)
- Recognize technology IQ of Village residents

L
Legal

LEGAL QUESTIONS - Asked to Leadership/ Management Team and Community Focus Group

1. What current and impending legislation will possibly affect the Village?
2. What is happening with changes in legislation?
3. What is the effect of changing and/or constant legislative changes?

LEGAL FACTORS- Expressed by Village groups

- Laws, regulations, ordinances, mandates (e.g., unfunded mandates, outdated ordinances)
- Impact of changes in legislation on how municipalities operate
- Undue influence of attorneys and judges on tax structure, tax appeals, etc.
- Litigious society
- New laws that affect law enforcement

- New laws that affect law enforcement
- Greater enforcement/oversight of landlords responsible for vacant properties
- Recognition of increase in crime and violence nationally
- Ongoing review of zoning regulations (e.g., corner lots, fencing- cannot use all owned property)
- Speeding in residential areas
- Collaboration with neighboring villages
- Police reform is resulting in challenges

E
Environmental

ENVIRONMENTAL Questions - Asked to Leadership/ Management Team and Community Focus Group

1. What are the environmental considerations that may affect the Village?
2. How are the effects of climate, weather, and changing conditions affecting the Village?
3. Do natural disasters occur? If so, what is the impact?
4. What are the recycling standards and attitudes towards green products?
5. Is it possible to support renewable energy?

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS - Expressed by Village groups

- Climate change (e.g., impact, drought, heating in urban areas, loss of native habitats)
- Water (e.g., availability, quality, flooding, shortages)
- Green New Deal (impact on local infrastructure, sustainability)
- Societal understanding of the environment
- Impact on local government infrastructure

- Maintaining and improving infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, broadband)
- Continue to attract businesses (e.g. cannabis, Agri-tourism, small business, manufacturing)
- Tax structure (homeowners, how they can be lowered, affect on business)
- Continued fiscal responsibility of Village management (pandemic, keeping citizens informed)

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Timeline Strategic Goals Study

Strategic Design Meeting Dates

Sessions with the Village Leadership were held July 20, 2021, August 10, 2021 and October 19, 2021.

The citizen focus group sessions took place August 25, 2021, September 15, 2021, October 20, 2021, and November 3, 2021.

Project Phase	No.	Major Deliverables	Est. Start	Actual End
Phase I Initiation Planning & Discovery	1	Refine Project Plan	January 24, 2020	February 24, 2020
	2	Communications Plan for Executive Team	January 15, 2020	February 24, 2020
	3	Determine the Criteria for Reaching a Good Representative Sample of the Village Constituents	Jan 15, 2020	Feb 24, 2020
	4	Preliminary Outreach and Constituent	January 15, 2020	February 24, 2020
	5	Engagement Plan	Jan 15, 2020	Feb 24, 2020
	6	Develop Internal and External Tools and Methods for Data Collection	January 15, 2020	February 24, 2020
Phase II Design Development & Observations	7	Review Previous Evaluations, Assessments, and Reports Related to The Village Mission, Goals,	Jan 15, 2020	Feb 24, 2020
	8	Project Restart after being delayed due to COVID disruption	May 21, 2021	
	9	Review - Leadership Team Planning Session	July 20, 2021	July 20, 1021
	10	Execute Constituent Outreach/Engagement Plan	July 26, 2021	July 22, 2021
	11	Screen Responses From An Equal Sample of Constituents from VOPF's 10 Neighborhoods	July 19th – 30th, 2021	August 20, 2021
	12	Review - Leadership Team Planning Session	July 20, 2021	July 20, 2021
	13	Schedule Constituent Planning Sessions	July 26, 2021	August 5, 2021
	14	Review – Board Planning Session	Aug 7, 2021	Aug 7, 2021
Phase III Observations & Analysis	15	Review - Constituent Educational/Planning Session	Aug 25, 2021	October 20, 2021
	16	Review - Leadership Team Planning Session	September 28, 2021	October 19, 2021
	17	Analyze Data from All Planning Sessions	September 30, 2021	November 18, 2021
	18	Create and Distribute Top 5 to 10 priorities based on reviews I, II, and III findings	October 6, 2021 (Rescheduled)	November 18, 2021
	19	Review - Board Review And Discussion	October 9, 2021 (Rescheduled)	November 20, 2021
	20	Review - Constituent Educational/Planning Session	October 20, 2021	October 20, 2021
Phase IV Strategic Plan Development & Debriefing	21	Prioritize Key Findings and Recommendations	November 30, 2021	January 8, 2022
	22	Facilitate the prioritization of the Top Five SMART Goals	November 20, 2021	January 8, 2022
	23	Develop Strategic Goals that will help Leadership Team in implementation and budget planning	December 17, 2021	January 8, 2022
	24	Final Report and Project Acceptance	January 21, 2022	January 27, 2022
	25	Review - Board Review Presentation	February 7, 2022	February 7, 2022

STRATEGIC GOALS
CATEGORIES

At the conclusion of the strategic goal development process, strategic goals were developed in these categories:

- **Economic Development and Stewardship**

- **Infrastructure and Sustainability**

- **Health and Safety**

- **Marketing and Communications**

- **Community Engagement**

- **Preservation of Culture and Arts**

- **Ethical and Transparent Governance**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND STEWARDSHIP

A vibrant economy requires governmental policies that work to attract, retain, and expand business and economic development while simultaneously managing costs and operating the government efficiently.

Economic and business growth provides numerous benefits to residents such as jobs, income, and revenues for the operation of local government.

Themes from residents and Village leadership emphasized the need to:
- Improve employment opportunities,
- Strengthen the tax base, and
- Revitalize the downtown area

STRATEGIC GOAL
To strengthen and enhance economic conditions to attract and retain businesses and employers to support a thriving local economy

INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY

All aspects of the Village of Park Forest's livability are supported by its natural and built environment. The current and future infrastructure enables mobility, housing choices, and access to required services such as clean water, utilities, and broadband.

The community members acknowledged the physical aspects and unique layout are a critical element to the foundation on which the Village thrives. Residents highlighted the need to improve the conditions of transportation infrastructure including roads, bridges, thoroughfares, bike paths, and sidewalks, to update deteriorating elements.

STRATEGIC GOAL

To employ best practices to deliver high quality services, maintain and develop infrastructure in an environmentally and fiscally sustainable manner

Preserving the environment ensures that future generations can enjoy natural resources. The residents emphasized the conservation of biological ecosystems and continued investment in green infrastructure.

STRATEGIC GOAL

To mitigate the effects of climate changes through management of Village resources, partnerships, and the natural environment
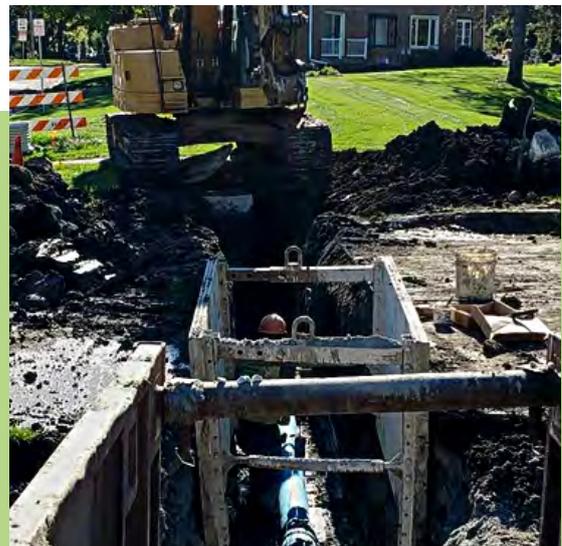
HEALTH AND SAFETY

Improving the health and safety of the Village of Park Forest is critical to its future as it will foster community cohesion, increase the quality of life, and attract new residents and businesses.

Park Forest residents want to feel supported in managing their health and feel safe from danger throughout their day. Fostering an environment that encourages active and healthy living is highly desirable. It was stated and echoed that more access to nature and features such as bike lanes and trails would prove beneficial.

Unsafe environments can dampen economic development and discourage business attraction, retention, and expansion.

STRATEGIC GOAL

To continue to ensure the health, welfare and safety of Village residents and property through the provision of excellent and innovative public safety services delivered with integrity and impartiality

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The extent to which the Village of Park Forest markets and communicates with its residents and business community directly impacts economic development and resident satisfaction/retention.

Residents of Park Forest emphasized the importance of updating and enhancing marketing and communications efforts including the Village website and other branding/marketing plans.

STRATEGIC GOAL

To continue to develop public relations and innovative marketing and communications to promote Park Forest

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Providing opportunities for residents to engage in governmental processes and be active members of the ecosystem is an essential aspect of any thriving government. The focus groups were interested in creating more activities and volunteer opportunities for youth, adults, and seniors and share the desire to strengthen neighborhood organizations and community partnerships.

STRATEGIC GOAL

To increase opportunities for engagement and maximize resources for all residents

PRESERVATION OF CULTURE AND ARTS

Environmental and cultural preservation is a crucial priority for the residents of Park Forest. The Village has a strong history of supporting and nurturing artistic and creative expression which has always inspired residents and attracted visitors while educating both groups.

The residents of Park Forest strongly support the preservation and investment into culture and arts which embodies the past, present, and future of the Village.

STRATEGIC GOAL

To build upon the history of Park Forest and cultivate a culture that meets the future needs of the community

ETHICAL AND TRANSPARENT GOVERNANCE

The Park Forest municipal government is responsible for delivering critical services to residents and must be accountable for its actions, responsive to feedback, and effective in its efforts.

A well-performing government can help improve nearly all aspects of community life. The residents emphasized improving communications and messaging, diversity, transparency, board accountability, and non-partisanship.

STRATEGIC GOAL
To provide municipal services in a responsive and fiscally sustainable manner through continued collaboration, innovation and regional leadership

VILLAGE OF
PARK FOREST
STRATEGIC GOALS

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: OBSERVATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Observations and Considerations

The Village of Park Forest contracted B2B Strategic Solutions, Inc. to undertake a significant process of identifying primary strategic goals to aid, support, and foster development for the nearly 22,000 residents of the Village. The information in this report was gathered by B2B in collaboration with the Village's Leadership/Management Team and selected community members that comprised the Community Focus Group.

Information was collected, analyzed, and presented to the Village groups for validation.

Many impactful comments and observations were captured during our meetings and discussions with the Leadership/Management Team and Community Focus Group. Below are the most significant remarks that participants wanted to provide to the Village Board for their consideration:

- Both Village groups held the general opinion that the process of conducting, collecting, and analyzing survey response data was beneficial for the Board of Trustees. It was recommended that the board continue this process on an ongoing basis.

- The Leadership/Management Team agreed that the strategic planning/ goal development process was a positive exercise for the department heads to undertake. The team felt that all levels of management could glean information that was useful and could lead to leadership development and "succession planning" discussions.

- The Leadership/Management Team recommended that the Vision Statement of the Village be "slightly tweaked" to state that the Village will "continue to be a culturally racially diverse community."

- The Leadership/Management Team recommended that consideration be given to recognize concepts such as *"Racialization"* and *"Integration Maintenance."* Integration maintenance was openly discussed as a result of concern raised by long-standing African American Village residents who do not wish to see "white flight" take shape, causing the Village to quickly lose elements of racial diversity. There was an expressed desire for the Village of Park Forest to continue to grow as a racially integrated and culturally diverse community. Many citizens and leaders voiced concerns based on the question of - How does the Village maintain its cultural diversity? Fortunately, the consensus was drawn that the Village is already a strong and culturally diverse community; however, significant consideration should be given to methods that will allow for the cultural diversity to be maintained in the upcoming years.

Observations and Considerations

- The Leadership/Management Team also recommended that the Village continue to share the best practices that have allowed VOPF to thrive and earn national recognition with other communities. There was a general feeling that neighboring Villages such as Matteson and Olympia Fields share more with Flossmoor and not so much with Park Forest. It was noted this might change with the recent and upcoming elections in the different communities.

- A significant observation made by both the Leadership/Management Team and the Community Focus Group was that people have moved into neighboring communities based on the appeal of their school systems. This is a national trend and one that the Village should take heed to. An attractive and appealing school system will attract a younger population and new residents to the Village. Both groups felt that it was the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to establish a better working relationship with the School Board of the Village. The following information was provided in support of this observation:

    – There are too many school districts, but no neighborhood high school in the Village since the only high school in VOPF was closed

    – There is a feeling that there is "no voice" of the people on the School Board
      It was noted that there is a general disconnect between the school system and the Village. This has been an ongoing issue for years. Participants indicated that all Village residents should be concerned with the school system whether they have kids or not. This is because, at some point in time, today's youth could eventually and hopefully become future residents of the Village. It was emphasized that all community members need to make education a priority and a collaborative effort where all residents are concerned about the education system of the youth and the future of the Village.

    – Both groups agree that there are limited resources in the Village. For example, the Village has a small number of medical offices (doctor, dentist, chiropractors, etc.). There are no medical specialty practices in the Village (e.g., cancer research, pediatrics, etc.). It was recommended that the Village Board consider a campaign to attract medical doctors and specialists into the Village.

- It was recommended by both groups that the Board of Trustees consider a unique program to focus on better marketing, communications, and messaging throughout the Village. The program could be comprised of the following elements:

    – Promote affordability
    – Stop using the word "minority" as it minimizes diversity.
    – Attract younger residents and families
    – Promote cultural opportunities
    – Better promotion of VOPF as a great place to live

- Make a solid push to ensure that neighbors (outside communities/residents) are aware of Park Forest's strengths.
- Promote the Village as a place for businesses to grow
- Improve promoting the Village as a great place to live. Primary considerations could be (a) the ability to get to Chicago on a fast train in 30 minutes. (b) the ability to get to Michigan, Indiana, and Dunes National Park in 40 minutes and Kankakee State Park in 45 minutes.
- Promote the quality of life for outdoor amenities such as parks, the variety of outdoor events, and the overall culture in the Village.
- Improve the accessibility and content of the Village website
- The Village could establish a texting/voice/email notification system for meetings, events, traffic issues that is separate from Code Red and is appropriate for everyday notices.

- It was noted by both groups that the Board of Trustees should place a heavier emphasis on considering the adverse effects of social media when it is used to spread both misinformation and disinformation in the Village.

- The Leadership/Management Team recommended that the Board of Trustees consider welcoming international trade and investment. The following information was presented in support of this recommendation:

  - Illinois ranks in the top three of the nation for site relocation of international businesses. Companies from other countries such as Australia, Japan, China, Germany, etc. are attracted to Illinois due to its valuation, investment opportunities, and the commerce hub of O'Hare Airport. A recent study showed that although the state is losing residents, international business relocation remains high. Factors such as education, engineering, technology, and cybersecurity advancements add to the vitality of the State and the attractiveness of locating a business in Illinois.
  - Residents in the south suburbs of Cook County have solid economic status.
  - Property values in the near-Chicagoland area rival property values in any metro area in the country other than New York City.
  The workforce in the State of Illinois is comprised of not only residents from Illinois, but also neighboring states such as Indiana, Iowa, and Wisconsin due to higher wages.

- Both groups recommended that the Board of Trustees spend a considerable amount of time recognizing the influence of technology in the Village and the surrounding areas. The following observations were made in support of this recommendation:

  - Advances in health care technology such as increased use of electronic medical records, the transfer of digital images, and the exchange of health information being more digital than paper-based

– The effects of technology and how its continued use impacts people, face-to-face communications, and human interaction

– The influence of technology and how it dictates how things are done versus manually figuring out the best way to accomplish tasks. It was emphasized by both groups that technology is a tool to be used to support operations and processes; however, it shouldn't be a deciding factor.

- Both groups recommended that the Board of Trustees consider and recognize that new hybrid employment models have evolved, primarily due to the immediate and lingering effects of the pandemic. Both groups observed the increase in factors such as internet sales and home business development. Both groups wanted the Board of Trustees to examine how the Village may benefit from changes from a revenue perspective.

- In addition, both groups felt the Village is not properly prepared to deal with the almost daily advancement of technology and that often the needs of Village residents are not met because of this lack. It was recommended by both groups that the Board of Trustees examine and address the additional investments that will need to be made to manage technology infrastructure and associated staffing. The following information was provided in support of this recommendation:

  – The need to increase broadband "build-out" to meet increasing internet usage demand
  – Cost prohibitive concerns of technology for many in South Suburbs
  – All residents need access to the internet for education and jobs
  – The need for affordable technology for police, fire, and other departments
  – Lack of power supply to the southland
  – The increased internet sales mean the Village has to work with businesses differently to enable them to produce and sell on-line

- It was observed by both groups that there is a general lack of access to healthy food options and fine dining restaurants in the Village. It was recommended that the Board of Trustees examine what could be done to attract additional restaurants to the Village.

- The Community Focus Group recommended that the Board of Trustees develop programs focused on the youth. The following information was gathered in support of this recommendation:

  - The lack of sports activities, primarily for girls
  - The need for more opportunities for children
  - The lack of organized activities for youth
  - The need to engage the younger generation and make them feel they are an important and valuable voice in the community.

- The Community Focus Group recommended that the Board and the Village become more LGBTQIA-friendly. A concern was raised that the Aqua Center and other Village spaces have designations for only men and women.

- The Community Focus Group recommends to the Board of Trustees to place more emphasis on the history of the Village of Park Forest. The following information was presented in support of this recommendation:

  - Historical-based tourism could lead to more outside interest in the Village.
  - New residents need to be more aware of the history of the Village. It was suggested to add Village history in the new resident handbooks.
  - It was stressed the history of VOPF is essential; however, many residents might not know the history. An idea was generated during discussion that a curriculum could be developed and taught to reflect the history of VOPF in both school districts 162 and 163. It was suggested that the Village consider offering a high school specialization on the Village history. During the discussion, several unknown facts surrounding the history of VOPF were made that many people in the session were unaware of (e.g., the design of the Village is used all over the world, the significance of street names, the Smithsonian exhibit about VOPF, the fact that special housing was built for returning WWII veterans, etc.). It was made known that three retired teachers produced a CD-ROM detailing the history of VOPF, and that a course could easily be developed from the CD.
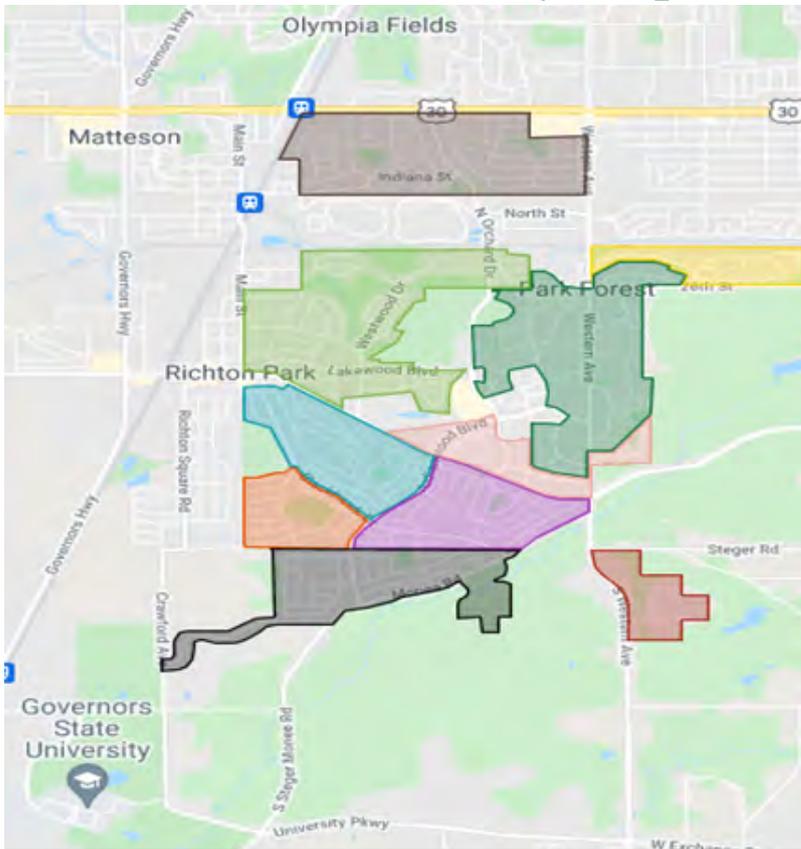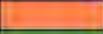
Observations and Considerations

- The Community Focus Group recommended the Board of Trustees to consider establishing more programs for seniors. Examples included engaging senior residents in technology by hosting classes for them such as on the use of Zoom for meetings.

- There was considerable discussion with the Community Focus Group concerning the Village being *"sustainable."* Participants explained that "sustainability" was written into the VOPF Comprehensive Plan, and that the Village has received awards for sustainability. Participants discussed and explained sustainability from the perspective that the future of the Village must be considered in all plans and decisions to ensure sustainability.

- The Community Focus Group recommended that the Board of Trustees consider developing programs that encourage residents to become more invested in their community. It was observed that if residents are not invested in the look, maintenance, and sustainability of the Village, it could contribute to poor property maintenance and a lack of pride in their neighborhood. There was discussion that stated that the Village become less dependent on ordinance officers to look out for problems and more on neighbors taking pride in the Village and stressing to other neighbors the importance of maintaining their property. Suggestions were given to have events that aid neighbors in maintenance, i.e., helping seniors. Another suggestion was made that neighbors put "well cards" in mailboxes which ask the community members if they have any needs or problems that need to be addressed.

- The Community Focus Group recommended the Board of Trustees address the problem of speeding cars and motorcycles (e.g., motorcycle races in the neighborhoods). It was recommended that more speed cameras be placed throughout the Village. It was noted that the Village cannot afford to hire additional police officers to monitor this type of nuisance.

- The Community Focus Group expressed an overall appreciation for the Board of Trustees' Saturday morning rules meetings. The group complemented the Board for conducting these meetings. It was noted that residents enjoy the chance to express themselves and report their concerns. Residents also enjoy the opportunity to interact with Trustees. The participants appreciated the frequency of the Board Meetings and staff working on behalf of the Village. Additional information provided in support of this observation:

    - Recognition by the Community Focus Group of the hard work of Village leadership and employees in volunteering over the weekends and after 5 pm. The community group also emphasized their appreciation of staff replying to emails on a timely basis.
    - Overall appreciation for access given to the Mayor and the Village Trustees
    - Overall appreciation of the engagement from the police department in the community
    - Overall appreciation for the transparency of the finance department.
    - Specific appreciation for the finance department receiving budget awards for multiple years.

APPENDIX B:

Overview of Community Engagement Plan

VPF Community Map

W Neighborhood		N & O Neighborhood	
Eastgate		S Neighborhood	
M Neighborhood		Cook County – Multi-family Area	
Will County – Multi-family Area		Trees, Fruit & Nuts Neighborhood	
Lincolnwood		Will County	

Village of Park Forest
Community Engagement Plan

Purpose:

The purpose of the Community Engagement Plan is to outline a set of specific outreach and public participation strategies to engage a representative sample of residents in developing the Strategic Goals for the Village of Park Forest.

Vision:

To have a representative sample of residents of the Village participate in the community engagement process that considers their views in a meaningful, appropriate, and timely way in the development of the Village Strategic Goals.

Outcomes Sought:

The community will be engaged in strategic goal development in a relevant and appropriate way through:

- engagement that focuses on the best interests of the community
- engagement that is open, honest, and meaningful
- engagement approaches that are inclusive and meet their particular needs
- timely, accurate, easy-to-understand, and accessible information
- transparent decision-making.

Core Values:

1. Public participation is based on the belief that those affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
2. Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.
3. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision-makers.
4. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
5. Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
6. Public participation provides communities with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
7. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affects the decisions.

Community Engagement Methodology:

Our fundamental approach to any community engagement consists of the following four stages: inform, consult, collaborate and empower. Within each stage, we utilize a shared approach to achieve our business objectives.

Community Engagement Major Tasks:

1. Create Strategic Goals Outreach Plan
2. Develop a list of key residents to include in community focus groups
3. Develop tool for facilitating focus group sessions
4. Conduct first focus group session
5. Analyze results
6. Provide public feedback
7. Conduct second focus group session
8. Present final results

Increasing Impact on the Decision

	Inform	Consult	Collaboration	Empower
Public Participation Goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities, and solutions.	Provide feedback on analyses, alternatives, and solutions.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the Strategic Goals development.	To include the public in the creation of the final Strategic Goals.
Promise To the Public	We will keep the residents informed.	We will keep the residents informed, listen to, acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public involvement influenced the final decisions.	We will work together to formulate solutions and incorporate the residents' advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	Resident input will influence the solutions.

APPENDIX C:
SWOT Analysis

VOPF SWOT MATRIX TEMPLATE_COMMUNITY

	FACTORS	
	STRENGTHS (+)	IMPORTANCE
1	THE OVERALL DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF THE VILLAGE	
2	THE ABILITY TO GET GRANTS	
3	QUALITY OF SERVICES TO RESIDENTS	
4	COMMUNITY - 1	
5	PROFESSIONAL STAFF & PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT	
6	DIVERSITY	
7	QUALITY VILLAGE AMENITIES	
8	LOCATION	
9	AFFORDABILITY IN HOUSING	
10	A PROACTIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT	
11	COMMUNITY - II	
12	VOLUNTEER BOARD & COMMISSION	
13	COHESIVE BOARD	
14	BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES	
15	VILLAGE DEPARTMENTS AND HOW THEY WORK	
16	MISCELLANEOUS	
17		
18		
19		
20		

	FACTORS	
	WEAKNESSES (-)	IMPORTANCE
1	LANDLOCKED	
2	PROPERTY TAXES	
3	AGING COMMUNITY	
4	LOW PROPERTY VALUES	
5	CHALLENGED PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM	
6	LACK OF RETAIL	
7	LACK OF ACCESS TO GOOD FOOD AND RESTERAUNTS	
8	NEED MORE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT/REHAB	
9	LACK OF MEDICAL RESOURCES IN THE VILLAGE	
10	MAINTAINING A BETTER INFRASTRUCTURE	
11	FINANCIAL ABILITY	
12	MESSAGING	
13	HOUSING	
14	CRIME ISSUES	
15	DIVERSITY	
16	CHANGING FEELING OF RESIDENTS	
17	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	
18	YOUTH INVOLVEMENT	
19	MISCELLANEOUS	
20		

	FACTORS	
	OPPORTUNITIES (+)	IMPORTANCE
1	COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT	
2	OVERALL DEVELOPMENT	
3	RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT	
4	VOPF BOARD	
5	STAFF	
6	RESIDENTS	
7	FUNDING	
8	BETTER MESSAGING	
9	MISCELLANEOUS	
10		
11		
12		

	FACTORS	
	THREATS (-)	IMPORTANCE
1	CRIME AND SAFETY	
2	EXISTING TAX STRUCTURE	
3	POLITICAL	
4	LITIGIOUS NATURE OF SOCIETY	
5	THE INABILITY TO MEET THE GROWING NEEDS OF THE VILLAGE	
6	VOPF LOSING IT'S CULTURAL DIVERSITY	
7	OTHER COMMUNITIES	
8	MEDIA	
9	LOSS OF SENSE OF COMMUNITY	
10	IMPACT OF EXTENSIVE RENTAL PROPERTY	
11	EXPECTATIONS OF WHAT A GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROVIDE	
12	MISCELLANEOUS	

VOPF SWOT MATRIX TEMPLATE_Leadership_Management

FACTORS	STRENGTHS (+)	IMPORTANCE
1	QUALITY VILLAGE AMENITIES	
2	PROFESSIONAL STAFF & PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT	
3	QUALITY OF SERVICES TO RESIDENTS	
4	AFFORDABILITY IN HOUSING	
5	THE ABILITY TO GET GRANTS	
OTHER	DIVERSITY	
OTHER	THE OVERALL DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF THE VILLAGE	
OTHER	LOCATION	
OTHER	AFFORDABILITY IN HOUSING	
OTHER	A PROACTIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT	
OTHER	VOLUNTEER BOARD & COMMISSION	
OTHER	COHESIVE BOARD	
OTHER	BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES	
OTHER	VILLAGE DEPARTMENTS AND HOW THEY WORK	
OTHER	MISCELLANEOUS	

FACTORS	WEAKNESSES (–)	IMPORTANCE
1	PROPERTY TAXES	
2	LACK OF RETAIL	
3	CRIME ISSUES	
4	LANDLOCKED	
5	MAINTAINING A BETTER INFRASTRUCTURE	
OTHER	AGING COMMUNITY	
OTHER	LACK OF ACCESS TO GOOD FOOD AND RESTAURANTS	
OTHER	NEED MORE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT/REHAB	
OTHER	LACK OF MEDICAL RESOURCES IN THE VILLAGE	
OTHER	LOW PROPERTY VALUES	
OTHER	FINANCIAL ABILITY	
OTHER	MESSAGING	
OTHER	HOUSING	
OTHER	CRIME ISSUES	
OTHER	DIVERSITY	
OTHER	CHANGING FEELING OF RESIDENTS	
OTHER	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	
OTHER	YOUTH INVOLVEMENT	
OTHER	MISCELLANEOUS	

FACTORS	OPPORTUNITIES (+)	IMPORTANCE
1	FUNDING	
2	BETTER MESSAGING	
3	OVERALL DEVELOPMENT	
4	COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT	
5	STAFF	
OTHER	RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT	
OTHER	VOPF BOARD	
OTHER	RESIDENTS	
OTHER	MISCELLANEOUS	

FACTORS	THREATS (–)	IMPORTANCE
1	CRIME AND SAFETY	
2	EXPECTATIONS OF WHAT A GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROVIDE	
3	EXISTING TAX STRUCTURE	
4	POLITICAL	
5	LITIGIOUS NATURE OF SOCIETY	
OTHER	VOPF LOSING IT'S CULTURAL DIVERSITY	
OTHER	OTHER COMMUNITIES	
OTHER	MEDIA	
OTHER	LOSS OF SENSE OF COMMUNITY	
OTHER	IMPACT OF EXTENSIVE RENTAL PROPERTY	
OTHER	THE INABILITY TO MEET THE GROWING NEEDS OF THE VILLAGE	
OTHER	MISCELLANEOUS	

APPENDIX D: PESTLE Analysis

VILLAGE OF PARK FOREST - COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP PESTLE ANALYSIS

POLITICAL

1. Lack of civility in elections / divisiveness / "Chicago style politics" /current political climate
2. Importance of non-partisan politics (tied as number 1)
3. Village infrastructure (water; sewer; roads)
4. Taxes (e.g. differences in housing; unfair in southern suburbs; tax dollars as a result of schools)
5. Collaboration with neighboring Villages
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

ECONOMIC

1. Maintaining and improving infrastructure (water; sewer; roads; broadband)
2. Continue to Attract businesses (e.g. cannibis; AgriTourism; small businesses; manufacturing)
3. Tax structure (homeowner; how they can be lowered; effect on business)
4. Continued Fiscal responsibility of Village mangement (pandemic; keeping citizens informed)
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

SOCIOLOGICAL

1. Importance of Education in Village (e.g. meet the needs of students; poor performance of school districts
2. Village collaboration with neighboring Villages (e.g. improved interaction)
3. Addressing the needs of both older and younger residents (e.g. services for elderly; programs for youth
4. Importance of resident involvement with the affairs of the Village /Neighbor to neighbor interactions (e.g block clubs)
5. Improved communications in Village
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

TECHNOLOGICAL

1. Ongoing review/audit of Village technology needs for continued growth (e.g. security systems)
2. Continued to improve communications on various channels/platforms (e.g. use of technology; paper; website; cable to promote and encourage people to move to the Village)
3. Apply "green technology" to Village operations that would include Village Hall, Village equipment; Village vehicles; fund through grants for renewable energy
4. Increase Broadband capabilities in the Village (e.g. impact on residents; school districts)
5. Recognize technology IQ of Village residents
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

LEGAL

1. Greater enforcement/oversight of Landlords responsible for vacant properties
2. Recognition of increase in crime and violence nationally
3. Ongoing review of zoning regulations (e.g. corner lots; fencing; can't use all of owned property)
4. Speeding in residential area
5. Collaboration with neighboring Villages
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

ENVIRONMENTAL

1. Infrastructure (e.g. water…PF has it's own water system; do not sell water rights /streets; sewer; roads; flooding)
2. Improve lighting throughout the Village (e.g. use of solar)
3. Alternative energy sources (e.g. solar, wind, etc.) for Village properties. Look at carbon footprint / sustainability considerations
4. Mitigate impact of of climate change
5. Recognition of threat of food shortages (e.g. droughts, floods; water shortage; etc.)
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

VILLAGE OF PARK FOREST - LEADERSHIP/MANAGEMENT PESTLE ANALYSIS

POLITICAL

1. Changing of Political Thought in the Country - Partisan Political Environment
2. Tax Structure - County/State Tax Structure…Impact on South Suburbs
3. Competing Interests of Surrounding Communities
4. General Political Dysfunction
5. State Mandates
6. Legislation / Changes in Legislation
7. General Lack of... (education, term limits, education in public schools, County system failures)
8. Misc. (Honorable Mentions)
9.
10.

ECONOMIC

1. The Overall National Economy (e.g. cost of living, wage rates, inflation, etc.)
2. Employment and Unemployment Factors Due to the Pandemic
3. Tax Revenue (timing of payments from the State)
4. Need for Highway Development (e.g. Illiana Corridor)
5. International Investment
6. Misc. (Honorable Mentions)
7.
8.
9.
10.

SOCIOLOGICAL

1. Age
2. Sex (e.g. acceptance of expansion of sexual norms)
3. Cultural and racial diversity
4. Overall Change in Demographics (population growth in some areas decline in others)
5. Overall Change of "Societal Norms" (e.g. lack of desire to work, changing values, etc.)
6. Effects of the Pandemic
7. Public Safety
8. Schools (education) - Funding
9. Social Media Influence
10. Misc. (Honorable Mentions)

TECHNOLOGICAL

1. Influence of Technology (e.g. health care, affect on human interaction)
2. Social Media
3. Fast Pace of Change of Technology
4. Building Out Infrastructure
5. Use of Technology (e.g. by seniors, by youth, new skills, etc.)
6. Investments in New Tech
7. Learning New Skills or Finding Them
8. Negatives of Technology
9. Access (e.g. too much? Not enough?)
10. Misc. (Honorable Mentions)

LEGAL

1. Laws, Regulations, Ordinances, Mandates (e.g. unfunded mandates, outdated ordinances)
2. Impact of Changes in Legislation on How Municipalities Operate
3. Undue Influence of Attorneys and Judges on Tax Structure, Tax Appeals, etc.
4. Litigious Society
5. New laws that Affect Law Enforcement
6. Police Reform is Resulting in Challenges
7. Misc. (Honorable Mention)
8.
9.
10.

ENVIRONMENTAL

1. Climate Change (e.g. impact, drought, heating in urban areas, loss of native habitats)
2. Water (e.g. availability, quality, flooding, shortages)
3. Green New Deal (e.g. exactly what is it?, impact on local infrastructure, sustainability)
4. Societal Understanding of the Environment
5. Impact on Local Government Infrastructure
6. Misc. (Honorable Mentions)
7.
8.
9.
10.