

Fargo Park District Strategic Planning Meeting #4 3.6.24 Handout

Agenda Item #1 Final Feedback on Mission Statements

Current Mission Statement(s)

#1 The Fargo Park District improves the lifestyle of the community through a comprehensive system of parks and programs.

#2 We provide year-round, quality parks, facilities, and affordable recreational activities to create a strong, healthy community where all are welcome.

Final Versions for Committee Feedback

- *Connecting community through places, spaces, and experiences.*
- *Growing community through places, spaces, and experiences.*

Agenda Item #2 – Value Statements

Committee Feedback – words to use in developing a Values Statement – Rank the following:

Words Identified for Values	#
Collaboration	16
Stewardship	16
Integrity	12
Inclusion	10
Leadership	5
Compassion	4
Innovation	4
Resilience	4
Dedication	3
Equitable	3
Growth Mindset	3

Fargo Park District Strategic Planning Meeting #4 3.6.24 Handout

Agenda Item #3 – Vision Statements Review , rank, and provide final feedback.

Current Vision #1	Current Vision #2
<i>The Fargo Park District strives to be a top-performing park district in the United States.</i>	<i>We enrich lives in our community by providing a wide range of parks, facilities, and recreational activities.</i>

Vision Statements for Discussion and Feedback

- To create a vibrant and sustainable park system that enhances community vitality through diverse experiences.
- We strive to be a catalyst to foster an active community, providing safe spaces that nurture personal growth, social connections, and environmental stewardship.
- We strive to be the catalyst for enhancing community wellbeing and belonging through exceptional spaces and programming.

Fargo Park District Strategic Planning Meeting #4 3.6.24 Handout

Agenda Item #4– Strategic Planning Survey and Focus Group Themes Review Committee Feedback.

Focusing on the most Important things...

Discussion – Strategic Anchors and Priorities – refer to following pages notes for background information informing discussion and identification of the “Most Important Things...”

Organizational Excellence

- Governance
- Master Planning – finance planning/HR, facilities planning
- Data Analysis System, ROI, etc.

Places/Spaces

- Programming
- Parks/Facilities, etc.

Relationships

- Schools
- Arts

Fargo Park District Strategic Planning Meeting #4 3.6.24 Handout

NOTES

Survey Main Themes Take-a-ways

- Changeover in the last 6 years. Finding a direction and sticking with it
- Create a refined system of evaluating programs, facilities & activities currently managed by the park district.
- Develop a system of communication that empowers staff to make critical decisions and keeps the community informed.
- Difficult to weigh each opinion because of the difference in size of the group that is polled. Need a system to help in the decision-making process. Communication of information is key. Get data-Placer AI
- Diversity in programming. Need focus.
- Every response is about things to “add” or “need more” - challenge will be to sort, prioritize and sunset (and no one mentioned stopping programs in survey)
- Governance issues are at the forefront
- The governance piece will help with culture and address some of the weaknesses mentioned in both the internal and external section.
- Governance, clear accountability, decision making skills. Maybe less people involved in all decisions
- How to balance the building of new facilities in new areas of town while maintaining existing facilities in developed parts of town.
- Interesting that the internal has staff as a strength but the external did not. How much gravity should the internal survey have over commented on themselves?
- Lots of strengths, expand on them and work on changing weaknesses to opportunities to get better.
- Missing social inclusion plan.
- More focus on new facilities than updating existing ones
- "Needing to address governance seems to be the priority because it sets the tone and expectations for everything else.
- A focus on providing indoor facilities also seemed to be a strong need"
- The Park District should take over and enhance the work of the FM Trail builders. A huge asset to the community that could be even more with public government involvement.
- The perspectives of the community and staff seem to match in some areas. Seems like a easy spot to start.
- Prevalence and knowledge of Board/Staff dynamic
- Public perception view and importance of stability and strong plan to move forward are important.
- Safety should be an underlying theme. Not if this would be possible if people don't feel safe.
- Suggest moving incorporating indigenous population in planning from future trends to can improve or opportunities.
- The community sees the politics and lack of stability between board and staff

Fargo Park District Strategic Planning Meeting #4 3.6.24 Handout

At A Glance Document Feedback

- A wide variety of opportunities events, programs, parks, trails, seniors, river access, sports center...
- Are resources being allocated to the correct buckets for facilities and programs based on usage?
- Broad offerings reflect broad community needs/wants and the diversity of neighborhoods in Fargo
- Determining the measures for success across a wide variety of programming and amenities.
- Develop a process that not only measures viability but determines a communication tool when programming will change or end to soften the blow to the community users.
- Good to have a process to decide what to continue and what to stop doing to better use resources
- How are all the opportunities communicated to the community? There are so many I am not aware of.
- How best to align all this work with others to determine what the Park District Leads, Partners, Supports, or doesn't engage. Need to establish processes with data to help determine
- How do these facilities match up geographically? Is that dispersed with purpose or what are the identifying variables?
- How do these facilities match up geographically? Is that dispersed with purpose or what are the identifying variables?
- "How do we measure what is successful?"
- When is it time to move forward with different ideas, even if it upsets the minority."
- I'd like to see the amount of effort or time that is spent to provide events. Then show with an ROI. Might very quickly provide staff additional time in their day for future projects
- It's easy to focus on just the area you're working in and forget how much we do.
- It's okay to eliminate things that run their course.
- Make the hard choices to sunset items - what do we want to be good at.
- More focus on non-sport youth. Dance, arts, more festivals
- Need to decide how to sustain everything
- Need to develop an overall strategy to understand if a project or program is worth continuing or perusing.
- No idea park district did so much
- ROI is lacking
- Should meals on wheels be the park district's responsibility?
- Surprising that senior services are run through the park district. Also, the lack of cultural and artistic programming
- The breath of activities, including based on climate / seasons, and water-based recreation of river, ponds.

Fargo Park District Strategic Planning Meeting #4 3.6.24 Handout

- The FPD needs to vet out each event/program and make decisions on what to keep/expand or phase out. Tracking each event/program would be beneficial.
- There are many facilities that serve many different purposes for the community.
- "Trying to be everything to everyone."
- Hard to measure"
- Under programs there are no tennis or pickleball programs and Courts Plus does both, including tennis in the parks.
- We need to put together a governance system that gives staff the ability to add change or eliminate programs or events and be supported.
- What do we think people (the community, and stakeholders) want from the Park District? What have people lost interest in? Are we up to date on the social climate of what people want and will use?
- Lots of similar statements can easily pair these down so there's less. I like the idea of having a system in place to stop a program.
- Need culture and governance pieces to drive plan.
- Need to make sure governance is clear so that it allows leaders to build a culture of success. As we all know culture eats strategy for lunch.
- Programs for diverse cultures to see themselves in our communities and programs. Systems in place to get staff buy in, direct public feedback to be a catalyst for a decision
- Sense of direction and buy in from staff. What? Why? When? How? Where?
- The resources needed to retain and attract top staff.
- These outcomes will take a huge lift from staff and a very talented staff. How can we recruit and retain high performing staff members.
- We discussed a couple weaknesses, Board over involvement "North Fargo neglect, mostly Board. Do we need a different structure, wards by area, longer terms, less change in Board.
- We improve physical and mental wellbeing through connection and belonging (sending for the whole table)
- What is the problem with governance? The recurring comments are about that. As well as cultural spaces/arts and what that looks like.
- Will all these pieces be a part of the plan - seems like too many.

Fargo Park District Strategic Planning Meeting #4 3.6.24 Handout

Notes

Internal (Staff) Stakeholder Survey Main Themes

Strengths	Weaknesses/Challenges	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff longevity • Providing excellent opportunities • Employees • Programs and services • Facilities • PTO and flexibility of time off 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Compensation (new people making what existing people are making) • Leadership changes • Lack of decision making • Lack of planning, prioritizing, visioning, and defined processes • Staff shortages • Board priorities, too much involvement in day-to-day processes and personal agendas • Follow-through • Emphasis on new facilities, not existing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic plan, define mission, procedures and standards • Community partnerships and sponsorships that benefit both parties • More community engagement • Salary survey • Opportunities for public assistance • Utilizing outside partnerships • Professional development • Equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board too involved in day-to-day operations and personal agendas • Stability • Funding • Equipment • Public opinion • Workforce shortages and employee turnover • Vandalism • Public opinion

Fargo Park District Strategic Planning Meeting #4 3.6.24 Handout

External (Community) Stakeholder Survey Main Themes

Strengths	Weaknesses/Challenges	Should Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities • Beautiful parks • Bike trails • Communication with public regarding activities and projects • Facilities • Flowers, landscaping, and plantings • Golf courses • Growing pickleball community • Green Space • Neighborhood parks • Parks are clean and well-kept. • Pools • Programming • Running, walking and bike trails • Services • Strong tennis program • Well-funded • Youth events and facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult programming • Bathroom and parking facilities at small parks • Board members with too much self-interest • Customer service at activities • Diversity • Lack of indoor facilities • Lack of lighting • Lack of security – safety in parks, on trails and drug sales • More pickleball courts • Need indoor facilities for tennis and pickleball • North-end being ignored • Not enough dog parks • Plant more trees • Senior activities • Stable leadership • Staff pay • Staffing • Upkeep on facilities • Winter trails/walking path maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balanced focus on greenspace, arts, culture, activities vs sports • Better nature trails • Board members should pay the same fees • Improving lighting • Indoor courts and facilities • Larger indoor pool • More accessibility for all • More communication with public (this survey is a start) • More free splash parks and pools • More Winter sports – including family skating vs hockey rinks • Personnel to enforce park rules • Reopen River Road in Lindenwood • Should be more like West Fargo Parks Program • Website – updated with current info.

Fargo Park District Strategic Planning Meeting #4 3.6.24 Handout

Best Possible Future	Critical Decisions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A District that meets the needs of all in the community.• A District with more activities and services.• Access to parks within walking distances of all neighborhoods• Accessible, affordable, clean facilities• Continue to make upgrades and maintaining beautiful parks• Create safe and engaging nature-focused environments• Indoor activities year-round• Maintained trails during all seasons• More courts, especially in the Winter• Re-invest in existing parks and buildings• Updated park spaces in all areas, not just South Fargo	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adding more parks• Adding more tennis courts• Adding more indoor courts• Adding more pools• Don't forget the Urban Core• Leadership• Accessibility and affordability of programs and facilities• Keep up the maintenance, so park spaces and trails can be utilized year-round• Keeping fees reasonable, so all can afford it• Plant more trees• Park security

Fargo Park District Strategic Planning Meeting #4 3.6.24 Handout

Community Partnership Focus Group Themes

Does Well	Can Improve	Opportunities	Important for Long-term Planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family events Outdoor spaces are well-kept Partnerships Facilities throughout community Youth activities Neighborhood parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board and Leadership politics and stability Downtown greenspaces and parks Are programs being delivered where they are needed Improve inclusivity: special needs, everyday residents, non-sports people Long-term planning/vision Trail network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More tree planting More connected trails Green space design More public engagement Master Planning Planning perennials Moorhead-Fargo connection Winter trails and activities Marketing with drone footage What are other cities doing (Sioux Falls, Winnipeg) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address conflict between leadership and board Commitment to follow plan Communication – internal and external Future planning for facilities Master Planning Track and communicate progress with the community
Future Trends	Most Critical Decisions 1 to 2 years	Most Critical Decisions 3 to 5 years	Foundation Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boomers' retiring Change in aquatic trends (splash parks vs pools) Tech planning: geocaching, drones, virtual parks Pickleball expansion Incorporate indigenous population in planning (living on native land) Millennials with kids Private/Public partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aging staff Depot decision Facilities planning Implement Strategic Plan Governance: board, executives, staff working together and communicating Metro Rec Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balancing opportunities as the city grows Infill and growth Equity of parks in all directions (north end) Next investment of facilities Stable leadership and governance Succession planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Champion private gifts Legacy projects Capital projects Scholarships Grants Endowments Funding upgrading of existing facilities