

## CHAPTER ONE – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Huntley Park District (“District”) undertook this Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan (“Plan”) to develop as a “blueprint” for Huntley community and develop the values and data driven roadmap to best serve the District going forward. This is intended to be a dynamic and realistic document, designed to strengthen existing programs, facilities, and amenities and adapt to the community’s changing demographics.

### 1.2 PLAN GOAL(S)

- Engage the Huntley community, leadership and stakeholders through innovative public input means to build a shared vision for the District to ensure there is appropriate balance of programs, facilities, and services.
- Utilize a wide variety of data sources and recommended practices, including a Statistically Valid Survey to predict trends and patterns of use and how to address unmet needs in the District.
- Determine unique Level of Service Standards to develop appropriate actions regarding parks, recreation, facilities, and trails that reflects the District’s strong commitment to providing high quality recreational activities for the Huntley community.
- Shape financial and operational preparedness through innovative and “next” practices to achieve the strategic objectives and recommended actions.
- Develop a dynamic and realistic strategic action plan that creates a road map to ensure long-term success and financial sustainability for the District’s parks, recreation programs, and trails, as well as action steps to support the family-oriented community and businesses that call Huntley home.



### 1.3 PROJECT PROCESS

The Plan followed a process of data collection, public input, on-the-ground study, assessment of existing conditions, market research, and open dialogue with local leadership and key stakeholders. The project process followed a planning path, as illustrated in *Figure 1*.



*Figure 1: Project Process*



1.4 KEY FINDINGS

Following the assessment of the District’s parks and recreation system, a variety of key findings were identified to support the implementation of the Plan. These key findings help to guide decision-making for the next five to ten years.

1.4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

The purpose of this analysis is to provide the District insight into the general makeup of the population they serve and identify market trends in recreation. It also helps quantify the market in and around the District and assists in providing a better understanding of the types of parks, facilities, and programs/services that are most appropriate to satisfy the needs of residents.

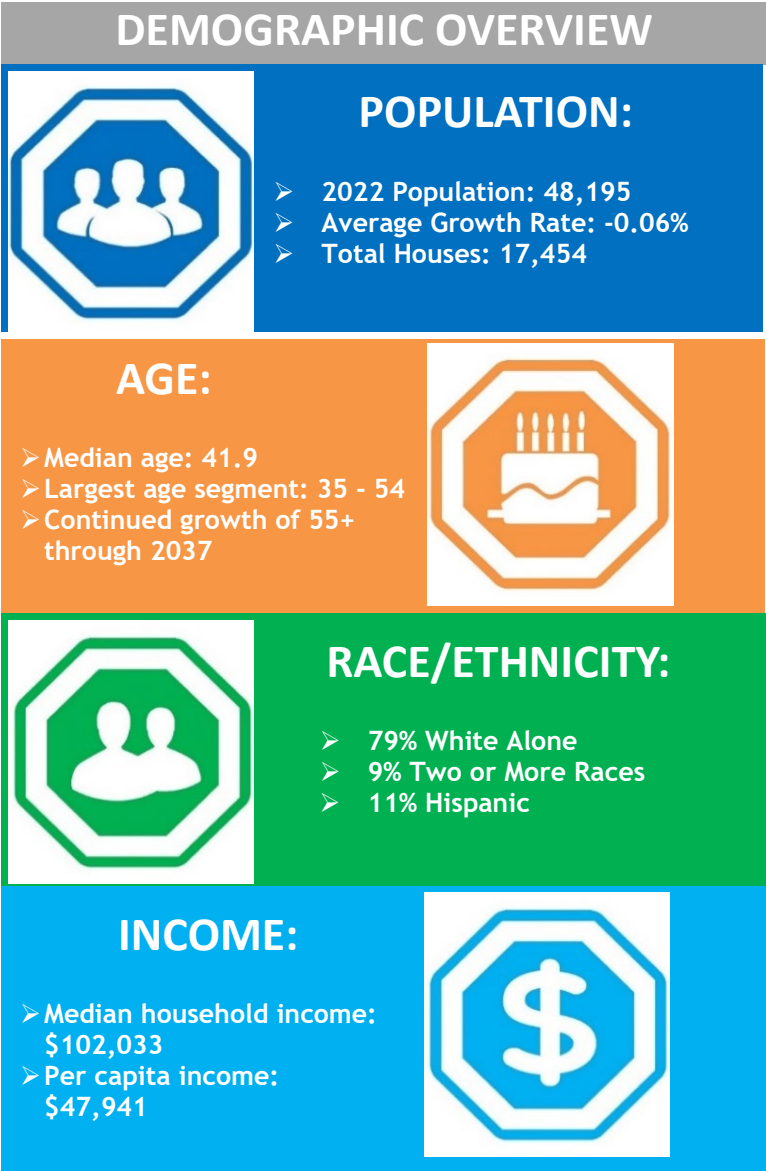


Figure 2: Demographic Overview



**Population:** The District’s total population has increased from 44,958 in 2010 to 48,742 in 2022.

Overall, the total number of households has increased at a steady rate, going from 15,907 in 2010 to 17,454 in 2022. By 2037, it is estimated that there will be 51,339 people living in 18,979 households.

**Age:** The District’s current median age is estimated at 41.9 years old (up from 38.5 years old in the 2010 Census) and is now older than U.S. median age (38.8 years old). This is impacted by the presence of the larger 55+ community that resides within Del Webb’s Sun City. Currently, 32% of District residents are 55+ years old, and this number is expected to grow to 39% by 2037.

**Race:** Analyzing race, the District’s current population is predominantly White Alone. The 2022 estimate shows that 79% of the population falls into the White Alone category, with Two or More Races (8%) now representing the largest minority.

**Income:** the District’s per capita income (\$47,941) and median household income (\$102,033) are both much higher than the state (\$37,306 & \$68,428) and national averages (\$35,384 & \$64,994).



1.4.2 COMMUNITY INPUT SUMMARY

# 1,200+

## PARTICIPANTS



Figure 3: Public Input Infographic

### 1.4.3 STATISTICALLY VALID SURVEY

ETC Institute mailed a survey packet to a random sample of households in the District’s boundaries including inside Del Webb’s Sun City. Each survey packet contained a cover letter, a copy of the survey, and a postage-paid return envelope. Residents who received the survey were given the option of returning the survey by mail or completing it online at [HuntleyParksSurvey.org](http://HuntleyParksSurvey.org).

The goal was to obtain 350 completed surveys from residents. The goal was exceeded with 478 completed surveys collected. The overall results have a precision of at least +/-4.4 at the 95% level of confidence. The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on recreation and parks investments. The PIR equally weighs (1) the importance that residents place on each program and (2) how many residents have unmet needs for the program.

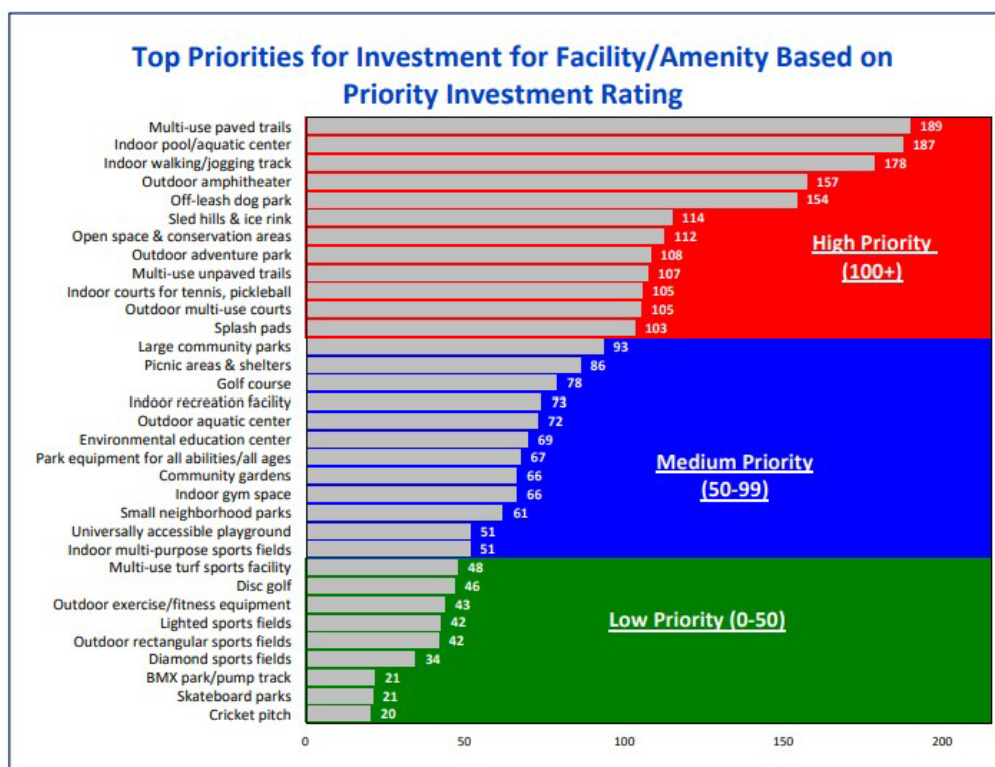


Figure 4: Top Priorities for Investment for Facility/Amenity

Based the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the following parks and recreation facilities/amenities were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Multi-use paved trails (PIR=189)
- Indoor pool/aquatic center (PIR=187)
- Indoor walking/jogging track (PIR=178)
- Outdoor amphitheater (PIR=157)
- Off-leash dog park (PIR=154)
- Sled hills & ice rink (PIR=114)

- Open space & conservation areas (PIR=112)
- Outdoor adventure park (PIR=108)
- Multi-use unpaved trails (PIR=107)
- Indoor courts for tennis, pickleball (PIR=105)
- Outdoor multi-use courts (PIR=105)
- Splash Pads (PIR=103)

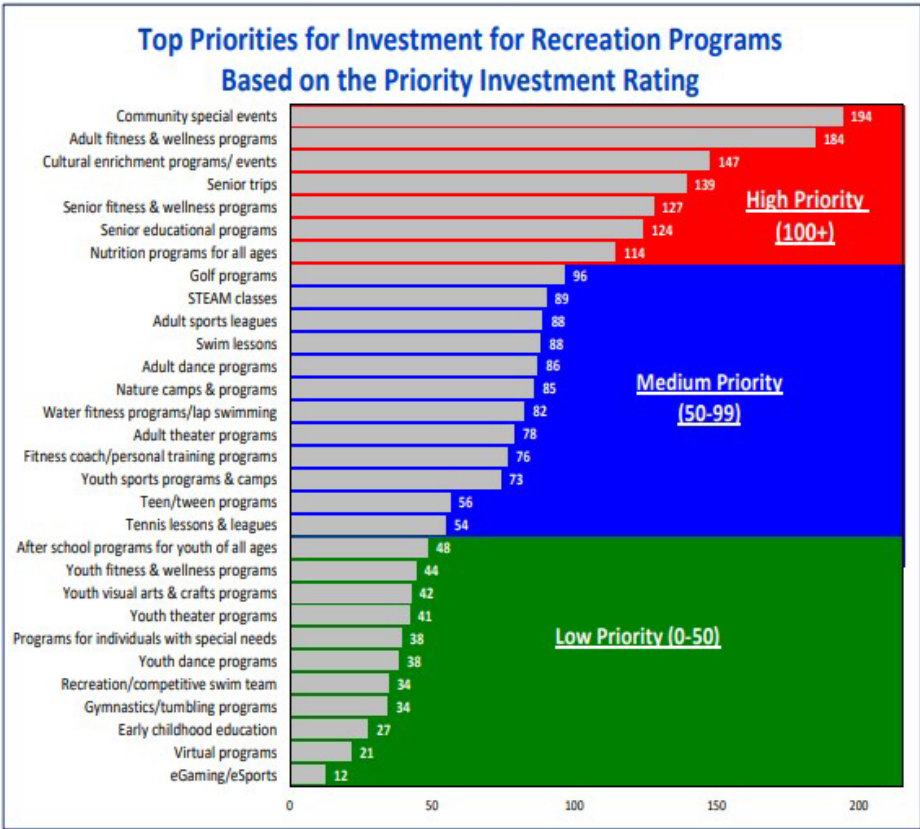


Figure 5: Top Priorities for Investment for Recreation Programs

Based on the PIR the following programs were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Community special events
- Adult fitness & wellness programs
- Cultural enrichment programs/events
- Senior trips
- Senior fitness/wellness programs
- Senior educational programs
- Nutrition programs for all ages

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#### 1.4.4 PARK ASSESSMENTS

The District staff conducted in-person site assessments of their parks. Although the Huntley community has access to numerous recreational options such as parks, trails, and state and federal lands in other cities and counties, the assessment specifically targeted the properties owned by the District.

For each asset in the District a grading standard was assigned to the observed amenities within it. The scores were determined based on field observations conducted by District staff. The categories were evaluated based on the individual asset's condition as opposed to the overall system during the inventory. If the condition of the existing amenity and/or facility was well below that of similar equipment in other parks, it was noted as such in the matrix. Number values were used to provide a numerical score for the park based on the number of opportunities and quality of opportunities offered.

Each site and its amenities were rated on an 11-point scale, with 0 being the lowest and 10 being the highest and an overall rating of Poor (0-2), Fair (3-4), Good (5-7), or Excellent (8-10). The assessment considered several factors including:

- Design and usage
- First impressions
- Access and visibility
- Community attitudes
- Site structures/amenities
- Site furnishings
- General landscape/hardscape
- NRPA 3 pillars Overall condition

The assets were given a Total Park Score and Park Rating with considerations for corrective actions needed and planned capital improvements. The assessment also included a section for a summary of strengths, challenges, and opportunities.

Park assessment findings can be found in section [5.3](#).

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#### 1.4.5 FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

The District staff assessed the condition of its facilities and assigned a score to each facility based on the condition of seven amenities:

- Doors
- Rooms
- Roof
- Restrooms
- Storage
- Utilities
- Windows

A grading standard was assigned to each amenity to evaluate the facilities within the District. The assessment focused on the condition of each individual facility, rather than the overall system, and identified the strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement.



As part of the on-site review, the quality of each amenity was assessed, with primary categories including the age, condition, and size of the amenity during the inventory phase.

The following scoring system was used:

- GRADING STANDARD F / BAD - CURRENTLY CRITICAL
- GRADING STANDARD D / POOR - POTENTIALLY CRITICAL
- GRADING STANDARD C / FAIR - NECESSARY, BUT NOT YET CRITICAL
- GRADING STANDARD B / GOOD - RECOMMENDED
- GRADING STANDARD A / EXCELLENT - EARLY IN LIFECYCLE

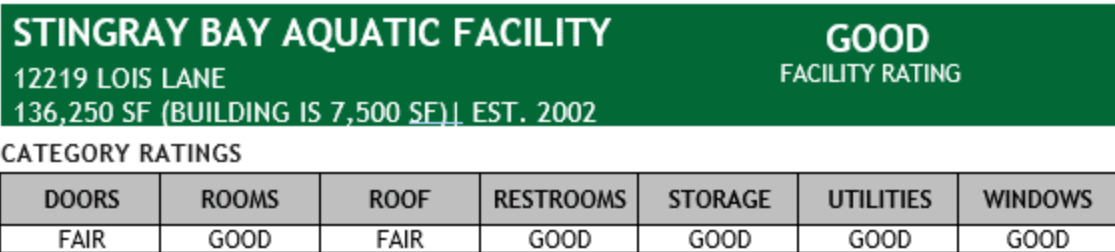


Figure 6: Facility Assessment Example

Facility assessment findings can be found in section [5.4](#).

1.4.6 PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

As part of the Plan, the consultant team assessed the District’s recreation programs. This assessment offers an in-depth perspective of offerings and helps identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities. The assessment also assists in identifying core programs, program gaps within the community, key system-wide issues, staffing, volunteer and partnership opportunities, and future programs and services for residents and visitors.

The consulting team based these findings and comments on a review of information provided by the District including program descriptions, financial data, website content, and discussions with staff.

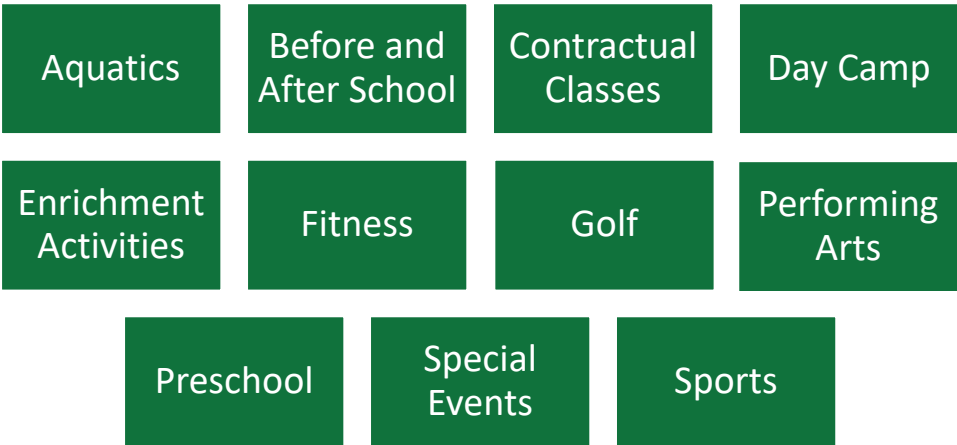


Figure 7: Existing core program areas

### 1.4.7 EQUITY MAPS

Service area maps and standards assist the District in assessing where services are offered, how equitable the service distribution is, the delivery spread across the District service area, and how effective the service is in comparison to demographic densities. In addition, looking at guidelines with reference to population enables the District to assess gaps or overlaps in its services, where amenities/facilities are needed, or where an area is over saturated.

Based on this, the District can make appropriate capital improvement decisions to meet systemwide needs while assessing the ramifications of the decision on a specific area.

The maps below provide a sample of the Equity Maps that include the District and other similar service providers that provide parks, facilities and recreation amenities for the Huntley community.

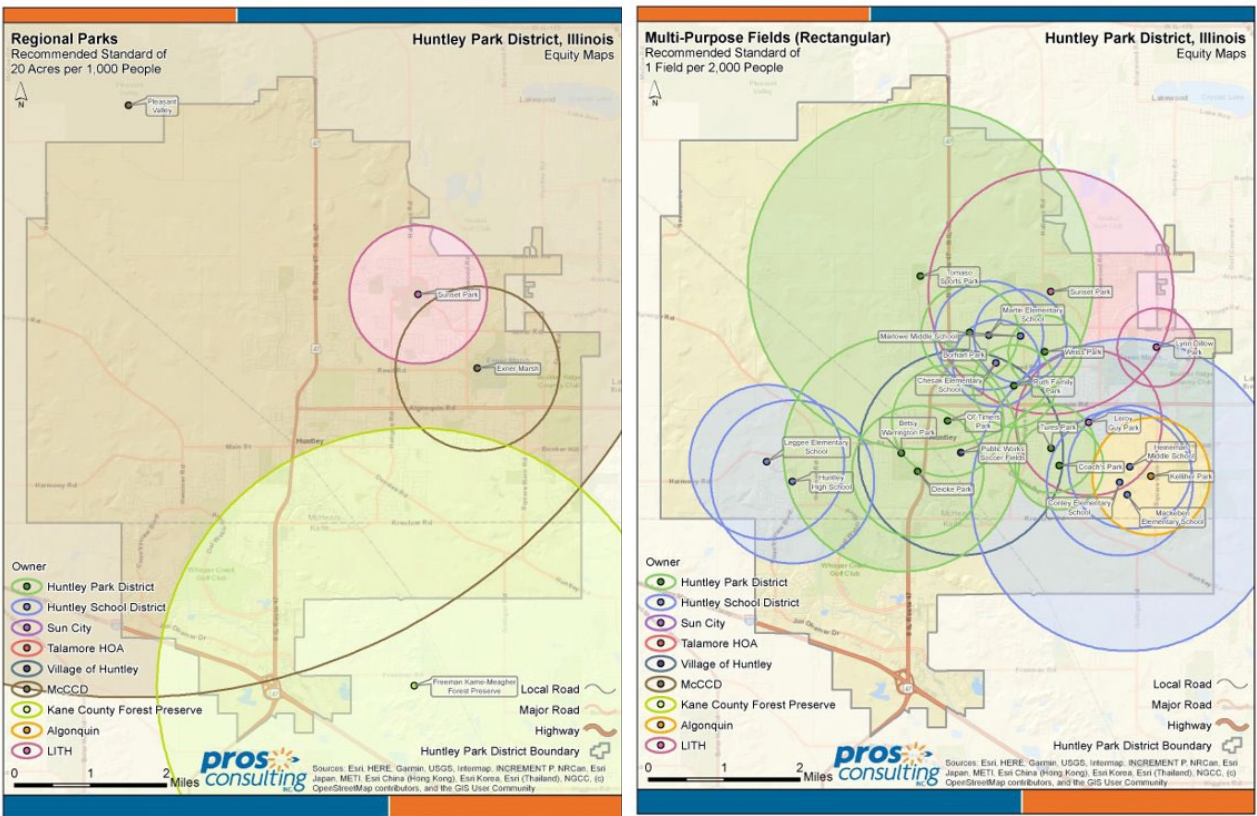


Figure 8: Equity Maps

1.4.8 FUNDING AND REVENUE STRATEGIES

The purpose of developing funding and revenue strategies is to help the District prepare for the plan’s implementation by identifying viable funding opportunities and sharing strategies that have been used by other agencies in Illinois and throughout the United States.

It is essential to identify new and sustainable funding sources to ensure the continued growth and maintenance of the District’s park system. The key to future growth is the diversification of funding sources which will help support the development and sustainability of the initiatives recommended in the plan.

The sources in this section have been selected based on the District’s desire to pursue them further and their viability. These are meant to serve as recommendations and guidelines and do not commit the city or the staff to pursue them.

Funding Sources Used or Currently Using					
External Funding Sources	Capital Funding Sources	User Fees	Grants	Taxes	Franchise/Licenses
Corporate Sponsorship	Dedication/Development Fees	Fees and Charges	PowerPlay! Beyond School Grant	Property Tax	Concession Management
Partnerships		Permits (Special Use Permits)	Local/Nonprofit Foundation Grants	Sales, Interest, and Other Revenue	Naming Rights
Volunteerism		Reservations	OSLAD Grant		Pouring Rights
Foundations/Gifts		Admissions / Ticket Sales			Advertising Sales
Friends Groups					

Figure 9: Funding Sources Used or Currently Used by District

Based on input from the District staff, the funding sources were divided into:

1. What works?
  - User Fees
  - Volunteerism
  - Ticket Sales/Admissions
  - IAPD Power Play Grant
  - Property Taxes
  
2. What can be better?
  - Grant opportunities
  - Corporate Sponsorships
  - Partnerships
  - Foundation/Gifts
  - Private Donations
  - Special Fundraisers
  - Permits and Reservations
  - Equipment Rentals



- Sales, Interest, Other
  - Concession Management
  - Private Concessionaires
3. What should be explored?
- Crowdfunding
  - NRPA Grants
  - Irrevocable Remainder Trusts
  - Various Federally Funded Grants
  - Other Tax Revenue



1.5 VALUES, VISION, MISSION, AND BIG MOVES

Based on an iterative visioning process with staff and Board using community input, demographics and trends and an analysis of the District’s programs, maintenance and operations and levels of service, the following Core Values, Vision and Mission Statement and Big Moves were developed by staff.

1.5.1 CORE VALUES

The following core values were developed through an interactive process during the Visioning workshop with staff and Commissioners. These are the core values by which staff will operate along with the value statements below and these have helped shape the Vision and Mission for the District.

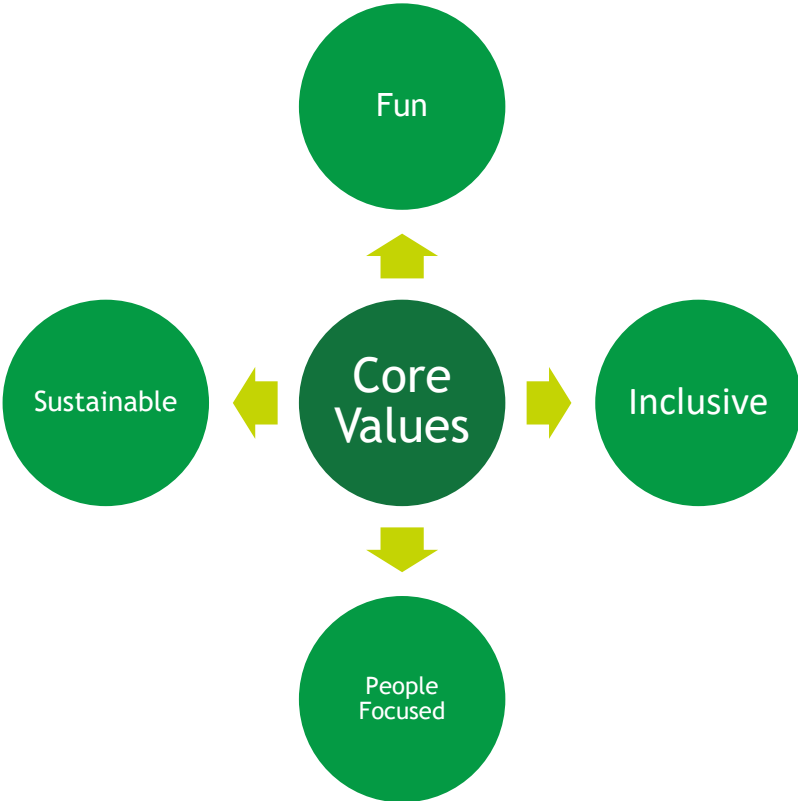


Figure 10: Core Values

- Fun - By creating an engaging culture for self and others that is exciting, engaging, and friendly, we seek to create memorable experiences for our community.
- Inclusive - By providing a welcoming and supportive environment, we seek to provide access to our offerings that celebrate differences, provide engagement, create understanding, and strive for equity.
- People-Focused - With an environment of empathy, growth and understanding we seek to provide a supportive and responsive environment for our staff and customers where feedback is welcomed, mentoring is encouraged, and traditions can be created.
- Sustainable - Through appropriate planning and responsible use of resources, we seek to conserve the environment, remain fiscally responsible, and provide opportunities to the community to remain healthy.

#### 1.5.2 VISION

The following is the vision statement that the District aspires to fulfill:

*“To be a leader in providing Recreation for Generations.”*

#### 1.5.3 MISSION

The following mission statement serves as the “why” for the staff to do what they do every day:

*“Connecting the community”*

#### 1.5.4 BIG MOVES

Staff and Commissioners collaborated to identify the primary District-wide outcomes they hope to achieve from this plan. These Big Moves are the most significant outcomes desired and when achieved, will serve as the legacy fulfilling the Plan’s vision. The following are the Big Moves that were identified through the process:

1. Address needs for parks, amenities & indoor recreation spaces based on the existing parks and facilities inventory
2. Collaborate with community partners to increase access to existing amenities & connectivity to trails
3. Develop a vision for enhanced entertainment/recreation value at Pinecrest Golf Course
4. Invest in staff development and staffing levels to match the growth in offerings
5. Plan a funding strategy including a referendum to address capital needs
6. Offer Recreation Programs that reflect community needs and evolving trends

1.6 CONCLUSION

The District has been an exceptional community champion, partner and provider for years. It’s signature spaces from Deicke Park to the Cosman Theater and from Stingray Bay Aquatic Center to Pinecrest Golf Course provide a variety of offerings and experiences that is rare to find in agencies of this size. This plan engagement was extensive and included wide cross sections of the community including the active adult and growing community through Del Webb’s Sun City.

Through this plan, the community shared their appreciation for the value that the District’s staff and offerings bring to them and they want to see more.

This plan provides a roadmap that is reflective of the community’s values and vision and championed by the District’s leadership. With the right mix of bold funding steps, creative collaboration and investing in the staff, the District is poised to continue connecting the community and be a leader in providing recreation for generations.

