



GROWING TOGETHER

A 10 Year Comprehensive
Master Plan
2025-2035



Homewood-Flossmoor
Park District
WHERE YOU WANT TO BE



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Priorities

The Homewood-Flossmoor Park District's Comprehensive Master Plan is a critical document that provides a roadmap to guide development, management and operations for the future of the entire district. The following priorities arose over months of engagement, analysis and discussion with district staff, board and community. These priority goals based on community needs are aimed to guide future progress, and along with recommended actions each are geared to align with the Park District's Mission:

To enhance the quality of life through diverse and inclusive recreational opportunities, facilities and parks while caring for the environment.



EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS & EVENTS

Strategies

After evaluating services based on the Service Analysis method and tool, one of four recommended operational strategies are suggested as an implementation tactic. These include:

INVEST

Invest provides an opportunity for revenue enhancement, thus, positioning the organization to distribute excess revenues to subsidize “common good” services, or to enhance exclusive services that can increase financial return on investment.

COLLABORATE

Collaborate to eliminate unnecessary duplication of services. Collaboration results in efficient and effective use of finite resources.

SUBSIDIZE

Subsidize so that investments can continue to be made to a greater “common good” producing broader and far-reaching benefits for the entire community.

EXIT

Exit allows for the reallocation of savings to subsidize “common good” services or to enhance exclusive services that may provide for increased financial return on investment.

General Recommendations

Complete **annual evaluation of programs** by applying the Service Analysis method and tool. Recommended focus areas for preliminary analysis should include those services that are furthest from their **cost recovery/subsidy investment goals** (per the results of the cost-of-service analysis and the District’s Financial Sustainability Strategy).

Until a thorough analysis of the District’s current service menu has been conducted for efficiency and effectiveness, there should be **no new services added to the service menu** (exception: services that are intentionally designed to influence community inequities).

As the Homewood-Flossmoor Park District community’s needs and demands continue to change and likely increase, competing interests for limited and oftentimes, finite pools of resources will require district staff to rethink how they do business, provide services where greatest impacts can be made, avoid duplicating existing comparable services, and increase collaborative efforts. Organizations are required more than ever to **leverage all available resources whenever possible** and to use them in the most responsible, meaningful, and defensible ways.



ENGAGING & SUPPORTIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT



Analyze Task Overlaps (e.g., management of rentals)

1. **Create an Inventory of Tasks and Roles:** Start by listing out all the administrative tasks and roles within the District. This includes everything from scheduling to data entry. You may wish to begin with one area and then expand the list.
2. **Gather Data:** Collect information on how these tasks are currently assigned and performed. This might involve reviewing job descriptions, observing daily workflows, or conducting interviews with administrative staff.
3. **Map Workflows:** Create a visual map or flowchart of how tasks move through the administrative processes. This helps in understanding where overlaps or redundancies might occur.
4. **Compare Responsibilities:** Compare the responsibilities assigned to different roles or individuals. Look for tasks that multiple people might be doing, or areas where one person's responsibilities might overlap with another's.
5. **Assess Efficiency:** Evaluate the efficiency of current workflows. Are there bottlenecks caused by overlaps? Are there tasks that could be consolidated or streamlined?
6. **Implement Changes:** Based on the analysis, implement changes to optimize task assignment and reduce overlaps. This might involve reallocating responsibilities, redefining job roles, or introducing new tools or processes to improve efficiency.
7. **Monitor and Adjust:** Continuously monitor the impact of changes made. Gather feedback from administrative staff to see how well the adjustments are working and make further refinements as needed.



Clarify Roles, Responsibilities and Assign Accountability

1. **Schedule one-on-one meetings or team workshops to align expectations.**
 - Involve supervisors, administrative staff, and relevant team members to get a full understanding of what's expected and what's currently happening as it relates to task management.
 - Conduct interviews or facilitated discussions to gather input.
2. **Create a matrix showing roles, tasks, and current coverage, highlighting gaps and overlaps.**
 - Compare existing responsibilities and identify tasks with unclear ownership or duplicated efforts.
 - Determine if any tasks are missing from job descriptions or are consistently falling through the cracks.
 - Create a Responsibility Assignment Matrix (RACI) to clarify roles:
 - R: Responsible (person doing the task)
 - A: Accountable (person ensuring the task is completed)
 - C: Consulted (provides input)
 - I: Informed (kept updated on progress)
3. **Write or revise job descriptions,** ensuring they are specific, concise, and aligned with organizational goals.
 - Update job descriptions to reflect current tasks, skills, and reporting relationships.
 - Clarify scope of responsibilities for each role, focusing on accountability and primary ownership of tasks.
4. **Create a training plan** focused on core administrative skills and task management tools.
 - Ensure staff have the tools, skills, and support needed to fulfill their responsibilities.
 - Offer training to fill any skill gaps.
5. **Develop performance metrics** related to task accountability and incorporate them into performance reviews.
 - Link task accountability to individual performance evaluations.
 - Recognize and reward effective task management and problem-solving.



Implement and/or Maximize Existing Task Management Tools

1. **Conduct a survey or team discussion** to assess current tool usage and unmet needs.

- Assess the tools currently in use (e.g., Trello, Monday.com, Microsoft Planner).
- Identify gaps—are certain features underutilized, or are there tasks managed outside the tool (via email, spreadsheets)?
- Determine team needs (task tracking, collaboration, notifications, reporting).

2. **Create a short list of outcomes and features** to focus on.

- Define needs to be accomplished by using task management tools to improve accountability, reduce missed deadlines, increase transparency, etc.
- Prioritize key features such as project timelines, reminders, task delegation, and progress tracking.

3. **Provide Training and Support**

- Train the team on how to use the tool effectively, focusing on essential features.
- Offer ongoing support and encourage the sharing of tips or new use cases.



Develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

1. **Prioritize which tasks need SOPs** based on frequency, complexity, and importance.

2. Using the task inventory, **write a brief introduction for each SOP** explaining its purpose and when to use it. Clearly outline why each SOP is necessary (to ensure consistency, reduce errors, and/or improve efficiency).

- Define the scope—what the SOP covers, who it's for, and any limitations.

3. Use a process-mapping tool or flowchart to **visually break down each task into steps**.

- Work with staff to document each step of the task.
- Be specific, using simple, actionable language. Avoid jargon and keep steps clear and concise.

4. **Add a “Roles and Responsibilities” section to each SOP.**

- Clarify who is responsible for each step in the process.
- Include information on approvals, deadlines, and handoffs.

5. **Create a resource library** linked to the SOPs for quick access to tools and templates.

- Reference relevant **software, tools, and forms** used in the process.
- Provide links to templates, checklists, or supporting documents.

6. Add a **“Troubleshooting” or “Tips for Success”** section at the end of each SOP.

- Add common issues and solutions, along with best practices.
- Make the SOP practical and easy to follow, even for new employees.

7. **Pilot the SOP** with a small group and refine it before full implementation.

- Share the draft SOP with staff for review and testing.
- Ensure the steps are accurate and easy to follow. Adjust as needed based on feedback.

8. **Create an SOP template** for consistent documentation.

- Use a consistent format for all SOPs to ensure readability and easy navigation.
- Include headings such as Purpose, Scope, Roles, Procedures, and References.

9. **Host a training session** and provide a digital handbook with all SOPs.

- Roll out the SOPs to the team with a formal training session.
- Ensure all administrative support staff knows where to access the SOPs and how to use them.

10. Assign a person or team to **review SOPs every 6-12 months**.

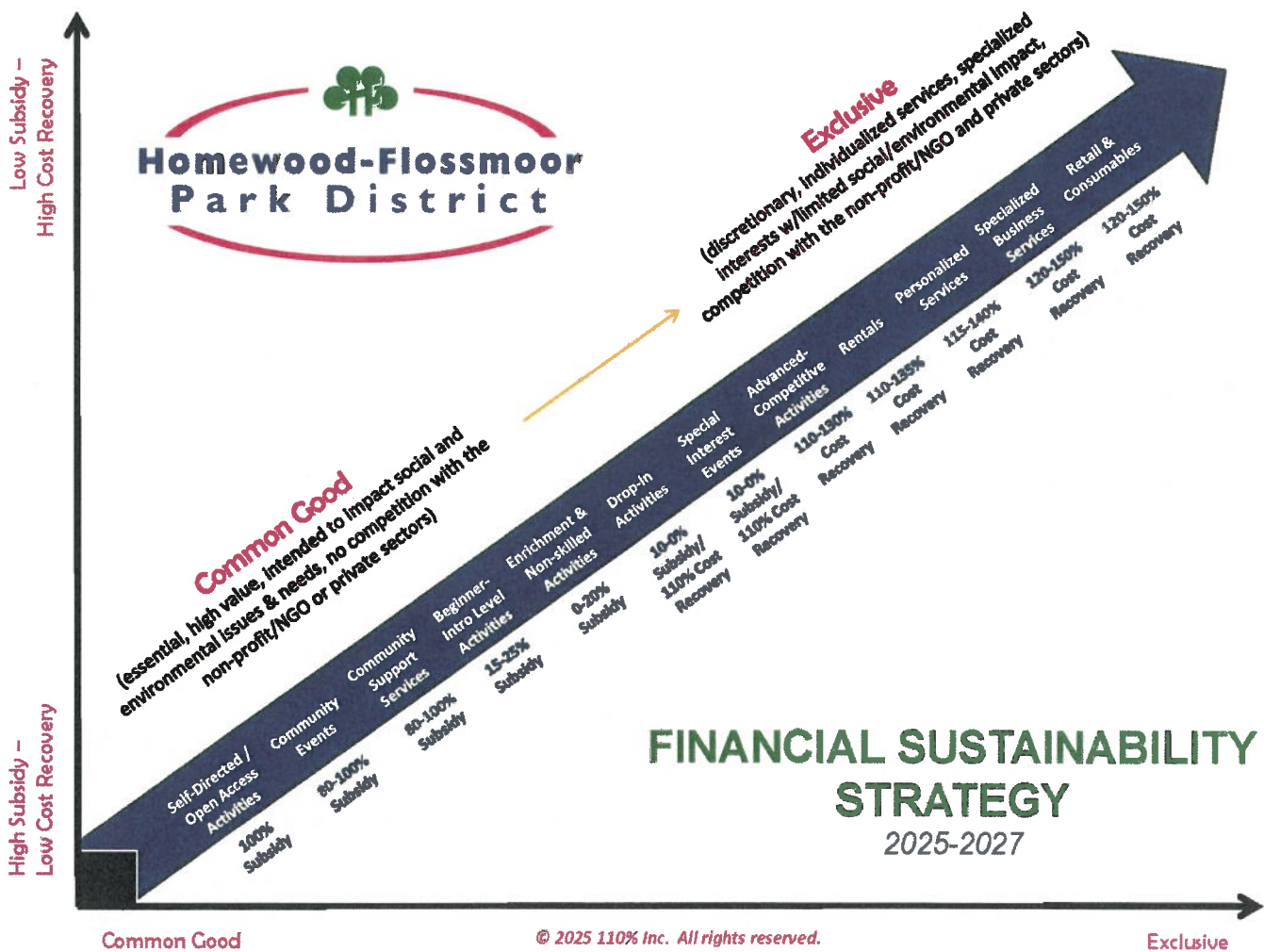
- Schedule regular reviews to ensure the SOPs remain relevant.
- Update them as processes, tools, or roles change.

DISTRICTWIDE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Financial Sustainability Strategy

The District's tax use and revenue generation approach is illustrated as a **Financial Sustainability Strategy Continuum** presenting the degree to which financial resources will be spent and expenses will be recovered and managed. This strategy shifts from one which suggests that all services should be provided at no or low cost for everyone to an **equitable philosophy** where subsidy allocation decisions are based upon "beneficiary of service". In this conceptualization, each type of service has a set of specific characteristics that provide a rationale for who should pay (e.g., taxpayers, the individual, or both) and to what degree. Ultimately, this aligns **subsidy allocation, cost recovery goals and expectations** with beneficiary of service. The three-year Financial Sustainability Strategy includes the District's Service Categories and cost recovery/subsidy goals and expectations.

Combined





Strengthen Collaboration

1. **Enhance cross-team coordination.**
 - Foster collaboration between administrative staff and operations and administrative teams to streamline workflows and improve support for frontline services.
2. **Improve internal communication.**
 - Implement clear, consistent, and efficient communication methods (e.g., shared calendars, project management tools, regular check-ins) to ensure all departments stay informed and aligned.
3. **Facilitate knowledge sharing.**
 - Encourage documentation of best practices, internal training, and mentorship opportunities within the administrative team to enhance collective efficiency and adaptability.
4. **Champion a collaborative culture.**
 - Promote a culture of teamwork and mutual support by fostering open dialogue, encouraging cross-functional problem-solving, and recognizing contributions.



Develop Communication Cadences

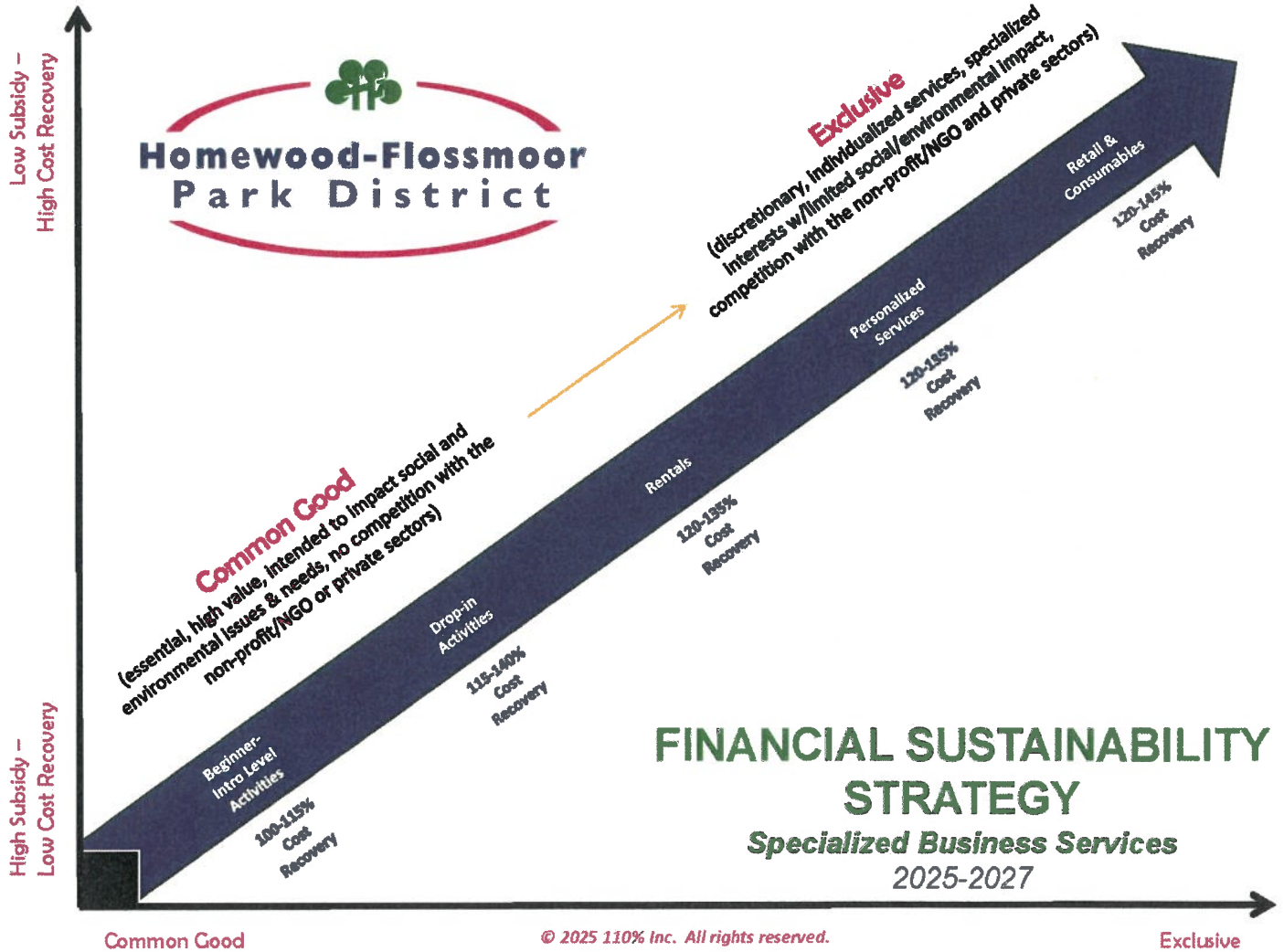
1. **Hold periodic check-ins** or status meetings (minimally quarterly) for all administrative support staff to review progress, address gaps and keep all team members aligned on priorities, deadlines, and procedural updates.
2. Create a one-stop shop for **news, policies, and updates** (e.g., intranet, info desk kiosks and boards).
3. Schedule **annual check-ins** with administrative support staff to evaluate and monitor task management processes and adjust as needed for improvement.



Financial Sustainability Strategy Policy

The Financial Sustainability Policy serves as a foundational guide for aligning service categories, beneficiary of service and the district's investment and spending decisions with its long-term vision of financial sustainability. The draft policy (included as Appendix) establishes the policy's purpose, clear principles for how the district will address cost recovery and subsidy spending, as well as other operational decisions. By adopting this policy, the Homewood-Flossmoor Park District affirms its commitment to transparency, accountability, and the responsible use of taxpayer funds. It ensures that future decisions are made with consistency, purpose, and a focus on maintaining quality services for generations to come.

Specialized Business Services



MAINTAINED PARKS AND FACILITIES

Parks and Facilities

Parks and Facilities are the backbone of the District. They provide the infrastructure on which great programs, events and memorable experiences are built. While residents are overall satisfied with the open spaces, improvements and maintenance were identified.

Rising maintenance costs have strained budgets and created backlogs of deferred maintenance within the district. This trend is impacting state and local parks across the country. The following recommendations are aimed at updating aging parks and facilities to meet current standards, create efficiencies to assist with future renovations and utilize local, state and federal support where necessary to achieve these goals. A ten-year capital plan follows this section.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Address deferred maintenance at parks and facilities.
2. Strengthen land stewardship
 - i. Incorporate more native perennials and shrubs into ornamental landscapes.
 - ii. Convert areas to native prairie/meadow landscape where possible.
 - iii. Integrate green infrastructure and green technologies where possible during design and renovations to improve the park district's climate resiliency.
3. Prioritize inclusivity
 - i. Incorporate accessible design, sensory and inclusive play, and a variety of park activities.
 - ii. Incorporate pathway and walking loops in parks where possible for recreation as well as providing accessible routes to amenities.
 - iii. Engage communities in planning.
4. Improve efficiencies
 - i. Standardize equipment (drinking fountains) and site furniture.
 - ii. Develop community partners to engage in maintenance and upkeep of parks.
 - iii. Combine maintenance and repairs at parks and utilize grants where applicable to address entire park renovations for cost savings.
 - iv. Upgrade facilities to improve energy efficiency.
5. Balance growth
 - i. Consider land acquisition when available and appropriate to meet needs.
 - ii. Apply for grant programs to assist District in supporting capital expenditures.
 - iii. Create park master plans through thoughtful community engagement and assessment of need. Utilize master plans to guide development and aging amenities' replacement with appropriate new features. For example, not all amenities need to be replaced in kind; some areas may be better served with removal of existing.

RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS & EVENTS

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Complete annual evaluations of programs by applying the Service Analysis method and tool so services align with the District's Financial sustainability strategy.
2. Evaluate existing partnerships and agreements: Collaborations should be advantageous relationships that position participating organizations to utilize resources efficiently for cost-effective service delivery.
3. Identify new Partnership opportunities and agreements.

ENGAGING & SUPPORTIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Create an Administrative Action plan to implement recommendations from the Administrative Analysis.
2. Analyze task overlaps to improve efficiencies.
3. Improve team communication by clarifying roles, responsibilities and assign accountability.
4. Implement and maximize existing management tools.
5. Develop standard operating procedures.
6. Strengthen collaboration.
7. Develop communication cadences.

DISTRICTWIDE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Adopt a financial sustainability policy for aligning service categories, beneficiary of service and the district's investment and spending decisions with its long-term vision of financial sustainability.

MAINTAINED PARKS & FACILITIES

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Address deferred maintenance.
2. Strengthen land stewardship.
3. Prioritize inclusivity.
4. Improve efficiencies.
5. Balance growth.