

Mill Creek MetroParks

Action Plan

SUMMARY

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Community Engagement

goal

Enhance Mill Creek MetroParks' mission through effective partnerships, communications, signage, and promotions.

objectives

Develop sustainable partnerships with non-profit, for-profit and/or governmental entities to leverage private sector funding to support MetroParks facilities, programs and services.

Define one brand and logo for Mill Creek MetroParks and key facilities to strengthen awareness of those facilities, such as Fellows Riverside Gardens, Mill Creek Golf Course, MetroParks Farm, and Ford Nature Center.

Establish internal communications guidelines and standards so all communications are conducted in a professional and consistent manner.

Provide visitors with a safe environment in which to enjoy their recreation and leisure pursuits so that they can appreciate the time they spend in the MetroParks.

Create a strategy that will ultimately lead to passage of the levy in 2014.

Develop an interpretive signage program that appropriately identifies the significance of the natural, cultural and historical resources within the MetroParks.

Enhance communications of the MetroParks to improve community awareness of programs, services and facilities, as well as to diversify usage of amenities and expand public feedback opportunities.



Stewardship

goal

Establish a long term financial and cost recovery plan for the MetroParks through effective use of the Mill Creek Park Foundation, grants, and business management practices.

objectives

Expand the Mill Creek Park Foundation, which currently has only a distribution committee, into a fundraising and advocacy board.

Coordinate fundraising between the Friends of Fellows Riverside Gardens and Mill Creek Park Foundation so the roles of each are clear to eliminate competition for community resources.

Develop a comprehensive cost recovery plan for programs, services and facilities that appropriately balances public funding support with earned revenues and also balances affordability and entrepreneurialism in the programs and services of the MetroParks.

Investigate and pursue private foundation, corporate and other sources of grant funding to provide a revenue source for capital projects, programs and other initiatives.

Develop a comprehensive fundraising program for the MetroParks that includes the Friends of Fellows Riverside Gardens and includes annual fund, planned giving and major gift components.

Create a business plan and pricing policies for Mill Creek MetroParks based on cost recovery goals for all facilities and programs.

Utilize business management and accounting principles for each core service and facility in the MetroParks.

Maximize the capability of new and existing technology to enhance business practices throughout the MetroParks.





Natural Resources

goal

Enhance Mill Creek MetroParks' management of natural resources through improved access of developed trails, opening new parks in underserved areas of the County, and incorporation of a natural resources management plan.

objectives


- Develop a natural resource plan to advocate for an ecosystem approach to natural resource management as part of a regional "green" strategy.
- Determine areas that need to be enhanced and establish an approach to improve the quality of the resource and the funding needed to make the improvements.
- Develop a MetroParks-wide sustainability plan to expand our leadership role in the community.
- Determine areas of Mahoning County that are underserved by the MetroParks and the types of open space amenities missing in the area.
- Create a trail assessment plan that prioritizes improvements.
- Expand natural resources education.

Recreation & Education

goal

Create broader recreation and education programs that inspire more users to experience Mill Creek MetroParks for the value it provides to the community.

objectives

- Identify gaps in recreation and education services in the community, and develop programs to fill those needs.
 - Clearly establish the core essential, important and value-added services for the Recreation & Education Department and manage each for excellence.
 - Determine the current standards in place for educational programs and make changes to those programs to provide consistency across MetroParks departments.
 - Evaluate MetroParks events on where they are in their life cycle and make adjustments to maximize the value, participation and cost efficiency of services provided.
 - Enhance the support of organizations that use the MetroParks to sustain and expand community participation.
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Infrastructure

goal

Create an effective capital improvement and maintenance plan to preserve the historic aspects of Mill Creek MetroParks as well as provide a safe and enjoyable experience.

objectives

- Enhance the quality of maintenance and care at current MetroParks facilities.
- Provide parks, trails and recreational facilities that reflect the ability to serve a diverse public.
- Upgrade parks, trails and recreational facilities to meet the needs of current users and to support infrastructure improvements to keep the MetroParks as a positive public asset.
- Determine the historic elements in the MetroParks that need to be protected and invested in for the future.
- Improve signage in the MetroParks that includes GPS locators.
- Develop a capital improvements schedule and establish capital improvement criteria to determine the cost benefit of each improvement.
- Leverage a variety of resources to support capital and operational needs of the MetroParks, including consideration of a second levy for capital improvements.

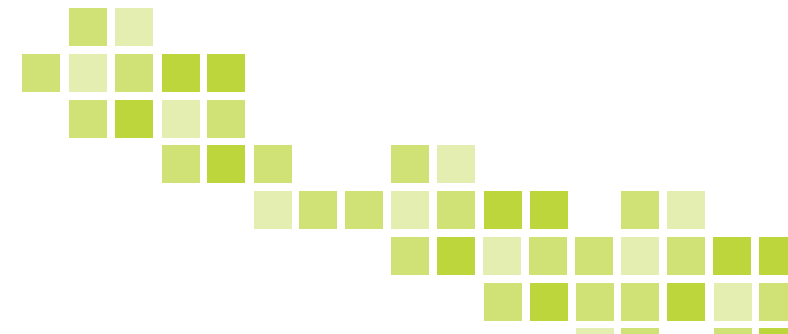
Our People

goal

Provide employees with the necessary knowledge and skills to perform their jobs efficiently and effectively, in order to serve the needs of Mill Creek MetroParks and the community.

objectives

- Instill a "MetroParks first", "department second", "me third" culture.
- Maintain compliance with all existing laws and regulations.
- Update job descriptions for all positions and develop an updated salary plan based on the responsibility of these positions.
- Redesign the MetroParks organizational chart into a functional management model.
- Invest in staff development and training.
- Address the need for contracted Human Resources and Technology positions as the budget allows.
- Update all personnel policies and procedures and ensure consistent adherence.



Mission Statement

The mission of Mill Creek MetroParks is to provide park, recreational, and open space facilities of regional significance. In fulfilling this mission our objectives are:

To be responsive to community needs

Studies and surveys direct the MetroParks to preserve appropriate natural and cultural areas, make improvements to MetroParks facilities, develop additional recreational opportunities, and continue to strengthen activity and public information programming

To be environmentally sound

Stewardship strategies will be dictated by the intrinsic nature of the land.

To be adaptable

The only certainty in our world is that change is occurring at an increasing rate. To respond, the MetroParks must maintain strong public information and involvement programs and form new kinds of creative liaisons to meet changing needs.

To be economically feasible

The MetroParks has finite resources that are not guaranteed in perpetuity. It must constantly work to broaden its base, especially through new partnerships. Revenue generating programs and facilities must be a key element in the overall funding picture.