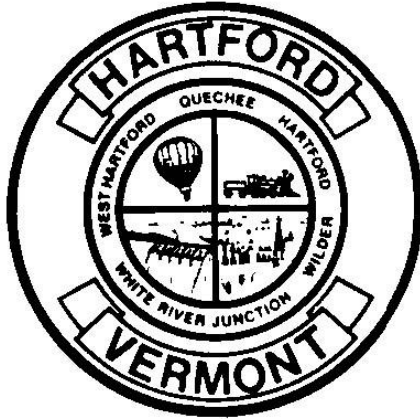


**HARTFORD, VT  
PARKS AND RECREATION  
DEPARTMENT**



**Strategic Plan**

**2020 - 2025**

“Our mission is to serve the recreational needs of the community by offering lifelong learning through recreational and educational programming utilizing existing parks and facilities.”

Adopted by the Hartford Parks and Recreation Commission May 13, 2004  
Updated and approved at Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting, December 2006  
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Reviewed objectives at Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting December 2012, 2014  
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Updated by Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting, March 14, 2019  
Reviewed by Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting April 7, 2022

## **Hartford Parks and Recreation Department Strategic Plan**

### **Introduction**

The Hartford Parks and Recreation strategic plan is an effort by the Parks and Recreation Commission and Department staff to prepare for the long-range future of the department from 2018 through 2023.

This strategic plan is an attempt to follow the adopted vision and mission statements of the department and to establish a path of direction for the department. This strategic plan will give the necessary direction to the staff in developing programs, short and long term capital projects, addressing social community needs and managing our natural resources.

Several of the goals and objectives mirror revised 2018 Town Master Plan (Parks and Recreation sections) and the department administrative yearly goals and objectives. This strategic plan was developed utilizing the strategic plan model outlined in the book “Management of Parks and Recreation Agencies,” NRPA Publication 1999.

The components of the strategic plan consist of:

- The Vision Statement
- The Mission Statement
- Environmental Scan (SWOT analysis)
- Goals
- Objectives (action plan)
- Time Line of Action Plan

### **Vision and Mission Statements**

#### **Vision:**

Something for Everyone – where the citizens of Hartford and surrounding communities recognize the vital necessity of recreation through diverse programs that reach all, regardless of age, gender, race and economic backgrounds. A department that cooperates with all community groups to bring a variety of recreation opportunities to the citizens of Hartford. The parks and facilities are maintained at the highest quality and improved on a regular basis to meet the future needs of the community.

**Mission:**

Our mission is to serve the recreational needs of the community by offering life long learning through educational programming utilizing existing parks and facilities.

**Environmental Scan (SWOT analysis)**

The Environmental Scan is a “look” at the department and the Town of Hartford community through the process of a SWOT analysis. The analysis encompassed the reviewing of the Department’s and Community Trends, Issues, Opportunities, Strengths and Weaknesses/Threats.

**Trends:**

- Individual awareness of health and wellness.
- Increase in community conservation / environmental activities.
- Youths specializing in one specific sport year round.
- Increased demand (higher expectations) on facility / park amenities and types of activities provided at facilities / parks to citizens.
- **Loss of outdoor pool venue for community.**
- Growing population and growing diversity of population make-up.
- Increase in the lack of outdoor experiences and increase in obesity.
- Increase in activity focused on community collaboration/cooperation – partnerships.
- Needs/demands of older adults (55 years and over) increasing.
- Increase in social networking services and use of the internet.

**Issues:**

- Quality of Life (maintaining)
- Obesity – people are overweight - creating health concerns.
- Five village town (transportation challenges **and lack of one location for all activities**)
- Lack of consolidated Park Division storage.
- **Maintaining current facilities before building new.**

**Opportunities:**

- Strong presence of community / civic activities (STORM, Youth Sports Clubs, active Chamber of Commerce, environmental groups and Lions/Rotary/Kiwanis clubs, Hartford Community Coalition)
- Utilization of Maxfield property
- Continued Master Plan development of Kilowatt Park
- Diversity of the demographic makeup of the five villages and potential connecting trail system
- Replacement of the Sherman Manning Pool through a community driven process.

**Strengths:**

- Professional staff
- Quality programs
- Park system
- Volunteers (individual and groups)

**Weaknesses/Threats:**

- Overall park athletic field and facility maintenance awareness to keep the properties in excellent condition (example: WABA / Pool / Maxfield)
- Tax base and constraints on Town budget to fund Park and Recreation delivery of services.
- General economic development of region and local area.
- Not prepared for the influx of an older population and increase in the general population.

**Recreation**

**A. Organizational**

**Goal 1: Continue collaboration and adapt to the community's cultural and demographic make-up.**

**Strategy 1: Maintain a variety of recreational opportunities for all residents.**

**Actions:**

- a. Continue to collaborate with special interest groups to provide recreation programs and special events; Polar Express, Covered Bridges Half Marathon, Balloon fest and Special Events.
- b. Continue to explore the possibility of constructing a river trail from Downtown White River Junction to Ratcliffe Park, which is part of the Latham Works Community Group.
- c. Continue relationships with the Lebanon/Mascoma Trail Network to connect with White River Junction.

**Goal 2: Secure a plan that will guarantee funding to maintain our existing recreational programs, resources and facilities.**

**Strategy 1: Develop financial giving opportunities and establish secure funding resources.**

Actions:

- a. Establish a capital reserve fund to secure funds in the operating budget to go toward existing capital maintenance and repair of existing facilities.
- b. Develop a give a gift catalog that shows images and descriptions of park and recreation related items that the Department can use through a donation.
- c. Establish a revolving fund for recreation programs.
- d. Identify cost-saving maintenance practices and landscaping options for parks and public spaces.

**Goal 3: Implement or participate in a community-wide needs assessment, maintaining a 4 to 5 year cycle.**

**Strategy 1: Initiate participation in community needs surveys or develop internally to collect data on a 4 to 5 year cycle.**

Actions:

- a. Continue to demonstrate through evaluation of community need through needs assessment and program evaluations for desired new programs and facility offerings.

**Goal 4: Create a sub-committee consisting of a variety of vested interests to establish a community center.**

**Strategy: Meet with community partners and stakeholders to identify a vested need for a community indoor recreation facility.**

Action:

- a. Create a steering committee to focus on the feasibility of developing a community center for the Town of Hartford. Look at developing in collaboration with the Bugbee Senior Center.

## **B. Programs**

**Goal 1: Have services and facilities meet the community's cultural and demographic make-up.**

**Strategy 1: Maintain a variety of recreational opportunities for residents of all ages, cultural diversity, and abilities to advocate and promote a healthier community population.**

Actions:

- a. Plan and implement town-wide indoor and outdoor active-living programs for families and adults.
- b. Maintain community wide events by enhancing its program through collaborations with other organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Merchant Associations.
- c. Continue participation in the Hartford Community Coalition.

**Strategy 2: Facilitate intergenerational social awareness and diversity.**

Action:

Hartford Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan

- a. Create and implement two intergenerational art/music programs per year (cooking, quilting, knitting and card making).

**Strategy 3: Meet the programming logistics of working parents through a more on-line presence.**

Actions:

- a. Continue to engage in social media outlets to promote further programs and offerings.

**Strategy 4: Build on existing coalitions within the community and identify new opportunities.**

Actions:

- a. Continue to collaborate with special interest groups to provide recreation programs and special events: Polar Express, Covered Bridges Half Marathon, Balloon Fest and other special events.
- b. Continue to explore the possibility of constructing a river trail from Downtown White River Junction to Ratcliffe Park with the Latham Works Community Group.
- c. Continue relationships with the Lebanon/Mascoma Trail Network to connect with White River Junction.

**Strategy 5: Continue to promote programs that create one-town awareness versus a one-village image.**

Actions:

- a. Program activities that create visitation to each village (Valley Quest, Tree Walk tour and fun run/walk events)
- b. Maintain the Parks & Recreation motto of five villages, three rivers, one town.

**Goal 2: Secure a plan that will guarantee funding to maintain existing recreational programs, resources and facilities.**

**Strategy 1: Develop financial giving opportunities and establish secure funding resources.**

Actions:

- a. Establish a capital reserve fund to secure funds in our operating budget to go toward existing capital maintenance and repair of existing facilities.
- b. Develop a give a gift catalog that shows images and descriptions of park and recreation related items that the Department can use through a donation.
- c. Establish a revolving fund for recreation programs.
- d. Identify cost-saving maintenance practices and landscaping options for parks and public spaces.

**Goal 3: Provide and maintain desired and high-quality programs and services.**

**Strategy 1: Create short-term and long-term measurable assessments of Parks and Recreation services and facilities.**

Actions:

- a. Use evaluations at the end of every recreational program to identify what worked, didn't work and desired new programs.
- b. Maintain the Survey Monkey online program and apply the data to evaluation summaries.
- c. Implement or participate in a community wide needs assessment and program evaluations, every 4 to 5 years.

**Goal 4: Evaluate the need for a community indoor recreational facility.**

**Strategy 1: Engage community partners and stakeholders in the process.**

Action:

- b. Create a steering committee to focus on the feasibility of developing a community center for the Town of Hartford.
- c. Consider collaboration with the Bugbee Senior Center.

**Goal 5: Integrate Town and School Services and Facilities**

**Strategy 1: Have department youth & adult athletics become an integral part of developing an entire town/school sport programs and facilities.**

Actions:

- a. Maintain relationship with Hartford High School Athletics using their system to aid in the development of the youth sport and recreation programs.
- b. Maintain representation on the Hartford Field Facility Use Committee.

**Goal 6: Maintain the rural character of our community landscape.**

**Strategy 1: Facilitate community appreciation of preserving opens spaces and forested areas as recreational resources.**

Action:

- a. Schedule community conservation/environmental educational programs over the course of a year working in partnership with the Hartford Conservation Commission.

**Time Line**

The time line is a matrix showing anticipated schedule when objectives / actions will be implemented and/or the start of an objective. The time line activities will vary due to the budget constraints, staff ability to accomplish tasks, political climate and community/economic development. (see attached matrix)

	Based on a calendar year				
Action	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
<b>Organizational</b>					
1a. Collaborate on special events	x	x	x	x	x
2a. Plan to maintain existing facilities (WABA / Pool / Maxfield)	x	x	x	x	x
2b. Continue Trail Projects and Maintenance of Trails	x	x	x	x	x
2c. Community Center Specific Feasibility Study	x	x			
3a. Needs Assessment				x	
4a. Give a Gift Catalog	x	x			
5a. Continue collaboration with School on Programs and Projects	x	x	x	x	x
5b. Establish field usage committee with organizations using parks		x	x		
<b>Programs</b>					
1a. Enhance adult program offerings for elder citizens	x	x			
2a. Re-establish a Glory Days Festival		x	x	x	x
2b. Continue program partnership with HCC	x	x	x	x	x
3a. Maintain Survey Monkey	x	x	x	x	x
4a. Enhance youth program offerings	x	x	x	x	x
5a. Enhance programming, including turf program at WABA			x	x	x
<b>Social</b>					
1a. Two intergeneration programs	x	x	x	x	x
2a. Visibility in each village	x	x			
2b. Branding of Dept. through promo materials	x	x			
3a. Conservation and environmental education		x	x		
<b>Prepare for 15 CAPRA review</b>	x	x	x		



