



# RECREATION & CULTURE STRATEGIC PLAN

January 2021



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to all those who helped shaped this plan including:

More than 100 community members and stakeholders including local high schoolers who provided vital information through focus group and survey responses.

A number of Town employees including department heads who shared their perspectives to ensure the plan will integrate into all Town of Silverthorne operations.

Our 65 full and part time employees from the Recreation and Culture Department who gave time and energy by completing employee surveys, participating in focus group meetings, and who also reviewed the plan's progress along the way.

And our project team members who worked tirelessly to oversee the plan's development every step of the way. Joanne Cook, Recreation and Culture Director; Carin Faust, Youth and Leisure Coordinator; Steven Herrman, Recreation Center Manager; Kristina Nayden, Marketing Manager; and Sydney Schwab, Arts and Culture Manager.

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Facilitation of the Town of Silverthorne Recreation & Culture Strategic Plan was provided by 110% Inc, SE Group, and Kimley Horn with Jamie Sabbach of 110% Inc serving as project manager.







## INTRODUCTION

The Town of Silverthorne Recreation and Culture Department initiated a comprehensive strategic planning effort in the fourth quarter of 2019 with the intent of ensuring organizational improvement and effectiveness and establishing a road map and guidepost for operations moving towards the future.

The department is experiencing an evolution. One that allows for further growth and development while also setting an expectation for continuous improvement each and every day. An ambition and drive to do better for the Town of Silverthorne and the community it serves has become a calling for staff.

The department's primary interest throughout the strategic plan development process was to engage a broad representation of stakeholders. This included staff and extensive public participation. Advisory board and committee members, current users and other community representatives were invited and encouraged to participate in the process from beginning to end, giving the department confidence that the strategic plan, while an operational document, would truly become a representation of the Silverthorne community's interests and needs.

Plan development focused on a number of critical factors that tend to improve probability for organizational improvement and effectiveness including:

1. Development in cooperation with the staff who are ultimately responsible for carrying the strategic plan to fruition.
2. Input from a diverse representation of community members and customers, gathered through a variety of sources allowing for a broad reach.
3. Intentional plan design so that it is a “living” document - capable of evolving with constantly changing social, political, technological, and economic conditions (*note: This is more relevant than it was prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, which occurred during this planning process*).
4. Development with the expectation that the plan will consistently be monitored and measured, both in terms of progress and value.



The Town of Silverthorne Recreation and Culture Department's 3-5 Year Strategic Plan includes:

- ➔ *Four (4) Department priorities* resulting from extensive stakeholder engagement including public participation. These priorities are intended to direct department energies and resources over the next three years.
- ➔ *Twelve (12) desired outcomes* which articulate the intended results of the implementation of the strategic plan so that department priorities are positively impacted.
- ➔ *Thirty-nine (39) actions* needing to be accomplished in order to realize the satisfaction of desired outcomes.
- ➔ The level of resources required to accomplish each action; and
- ➔ The identification of each action's prioritization.

As a result of the process, the Strategic Plan was developed to guide the Recreation and Culture Department in implementation of an actionable framework that will allow for agile, responsive, and creative management moving forward.

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Envisioning the future of the Recreation and Culture Department throughout the development of this 3-5 Year Strategic Plan required consideration of the major themes and outcomes of the Town's previous community engagement efforts and the resulting governing documents. Alignment with the Town's guiding documents, and efforts to create a stronger community culture were important factors in the determination of each desired outcome and action step recommended in this strategic plan.



Overall, the primary thrust of all the Town's recent guiding documents is to support the evolution of Silverthorne as a place that people will continue to visit, where those who are lucky enough will choose to live, and a place that children will desire to come back to. In particular, the desire to establish a vibrant downtown in Silverthorne has been paramount to achieving this vision. Through each community process, residents and community leaders have widely supported the idea of creating a commercial destination in Silverthorne that is walkable, compact, includes mixed uses, and fosters a variety of businesses. Guidance documents have continuously reaffirmed that vision, and often recognize the importance of recreation and culture amenities and offerings in future redevelopment scenarios.

The Pavilion, the Recreation Center, the Silverthorne Performing Arts Center, Town Hall and the Library, existing businesses, and the Blue River Trail are all community assets that help provide the framework for achieving that vision. Recreation and culture programming are expected to continue to build upon and activate these physical assets to produce high-quality experiences for residents and visitors alike.



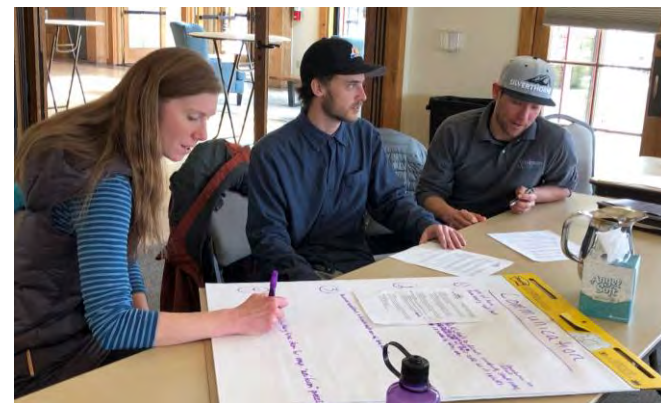
## THE STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

More than 25 hours of work sessions with the Department's project team and 10 hours with all other staff allowed for the consultant to hear from those who know the organization best and who will ultimately be responsible for implementing the plan. In addition, there were a vast number of touch points with a variety of community members representing different sub-communities and interests which complemented what was heard from department staff.

Community members were asked a number of questions that were designed to enlist their opinions and perspectives about issues that were deemed to be important to the future of recreation and culture services, and to assess how people in the community felt about the Town, the department, and the future. Questions asked included but were not limited to the following.

- 1. How would you define the target market(s) that the Town should appeal to most when it comes to recreation and culture service delivery?*
- 2. What do you believe will be the most critical key issues the Silverthorne community will face in the next 3-5 years?*
- 3. Where should the Town focus energy and resources in order to have the greatest impact on the community as a whole? Essentially, what should the Town's priorities be given competing demands and interests?*
- 4. What barriers exist that prevent people from participating in recreation and culture services?*

By engaging these different stakeholders, the current state of the organization, trends, markets, competition, demographic and economic changes, and current and anticipated needs and interests were identified and used to ultimately determine the strategic plan's priorities, goals, and actions.





**“This process reflects the Town’s interests  
in doing the work necessary to stay  
current and relevant. Kudos!”**

*An advisory board member participating in a focus group meeting*

### **Committees & Staff Work Sessions – An Introduction to Strategic Planning – October 7, 2019**

Work sessions were held for department staff as well as various committee members including those representing the Art Board, the Art Selection Committee, the First Friday Committee and the Silverthorne Parks, Open Space, Recreation and Trails (SPORT) Committee. These work sessions provided an introduction to strategic planning and the benefits of this type of process. In addition, discussion and analysis of the current state of the department and community, target markets, demographics, the competition, and other relevant topics were covered. These sessions also included identification of key issues and opportunities.

### **Community Focus Group Meetings – October 8, 23 & 24, 2019**

Community representatives, recreation and culture users, and Department staff provided personal perspectives relative to recreation and culture interests, needs and issues via focus group meetings. A total of 12 focus group meetings were facilitated including eight community focus groups with participation from school, local business, civic group, partner, user group, sponsor, and volunteer representatives.



Focus group meetings were held with various community members representing different interests, perspectives, and insights. Participants included representatives from a number of community organizations, business owners, department sponsors, Town of Silverthorne advisory committee members, recreation and cultural services users, and others.

### **Community & Town of Silverthorne Focus Group Meetings – November 14, 2019**

Additional focus group meetings were held to collect perspectives and insights from other Town of Silverthorne department representatives as well as recreation center users. In addition to these meetings, a special gathering was hosted by Fritangas restaurant to hear from those who work closely with or are a part of the local Latino/Latina community.



**“Look at current services and determine ways to make them more identifiable to the immigrant community.”**

*A Silverthorne community member participating in a focus group meeting*



### **Community Engagement – Celebrations Around the World – November 21, 2019**

As part of the annual Celebrations Around the World event, all teenagers in attendance were encouraged to respond to a series of survey questions that were designed to help the department better understand their interest and needs.

A community engagement board was also on display asking for feedback and perspectives about department services and general communication efforts and effectiveness.

### **Committees & Staff Visioning Sessions – December 12, 2019**

Identifying the department's priorities and intended outcomes was the focus of these visioning sessions which included a comprehensive review of all stakeholder feedback.

### **Development of the Strategic Plan – January – February & September thru December 2020\***

As a result of all work completed to date, the department's project team met and engaged in a series of intensive work sessions to further refine the strategic plan's priorities, outcomes and actions.

*\*NOTE: there was a delay in the process between March – August due to Covid-19 and the resulting pandemic.*



**“More collaboration. More minds in the room  
working together - like this process.”**

*A Town of Silverthorne employee participating in a focus group meeting*

## OUR IDENTITY

### Desired Outcomes

1. Departmental operations are grounded in Town mission and values and guided by the Department's mission and strategic plan priorities.
2. Improved employee awareness and understanding of the Town's mission and values and Department's mission and strategic plan priorities.
3. Improved community awareness and understanding of the Town's mission and values and Department's mission and strategic plan priorities.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH & VERSATILITY

### Desired Outcomes

1. Optimize financial, staff, and physical resources.
2. Establish trust between the community and the Department by responding to the community's needs and interests.
3. Increased diversification of funding sources.

## DEPARTMENT PRIORITIES

Four priorities were identified as the pillars for the development of the Strategic Plan and are viewed as critical to the future operational health and welfare of Silverthorne's Recreation and Culture. These priorities, when addressed with intention and vigor, are expected to positively affect and influence the organization, enhancing service quality and creating more effective and efficient operations.

## A CULTURE of ACCEPTANCE

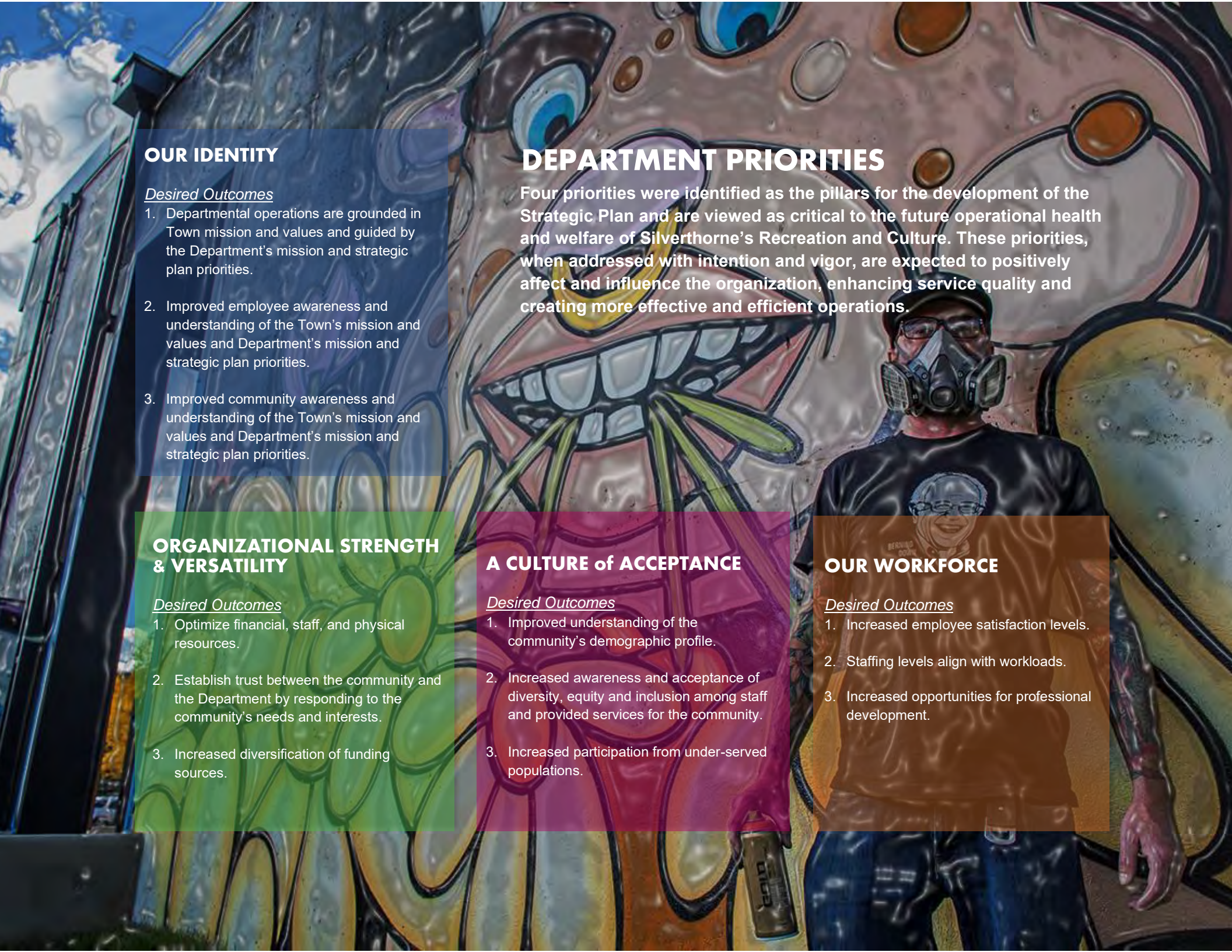
### Desired Outcomes

1. Improved understanding of the community's demographic profile.
2. Increased awareness and acceptance of diversity, equity and inclusion among staff and provided services for the community.
3. Increased participation from under-served populations.

## OUR WORKFORCE

### Desired Outcomes

1. Increased employee satisfaction levels.
2. Staffing levels align with workloads.
3. Increased opportunities for professional development.





# 3-5 YEAR RECREATION & CULTURE STRATEGIC PLAN



## Strategic Plan Framework

- Department Priority** ➔ The department priority is the overarching tenet that the department is working towards affecting, influencing, impacting, and/or improving.
- Desired Outcome** ➔ Outcomes articulate how performance will be measured based upon what was intended to be accomplished (e.g., improvement, achievements). Essentially, realizing desired outcomes will affect, influence, impact, and improve the condition(s) of department priorities.
- Actions** ➔ Actions are relevant, detailed, and necessary for outcomes to be realized and department priorities to be affected, influenced, impacted, and/or conditions improved.
- Prioritization** ➔ Prioritization indicates whether each action is a *Priority 1*, a *Priority 2*, or a *Priority 3* as defined below.
- Priority 1 – Urgent and needed; required for the organization to thrive; will create maximum impact
  - Priority 2 – Important; will provide impact
  - Priority 3 – Desire or want; satisfies interest
- Resource Requirement** ➔ Resource requirement indicates whether each action will require a *High*, *Mid*, or *Low* level of resources as defined below.
- High Resource Requirement - Significant staff, financial and other resources required
  - Medium Resource Requirement - Moderate staff, financial and other resources required
  - Low Resource Requirement – Minimal staff, financial and other resources required

**Priority: OUR IDENTITY**

The Department will prioritize the design and development of its organizational identity and broadly communicate it. This identity will be grounded in the Town of Silverthorne mission and values and used to guide the operations and management of the Recreation and Culture Department.

**Desired Outcome 1:**

Department operations are grounded in the Town mission and values and guided by the Department’s mission and strategic plan priorities.

Actions

- a. Create a relevant mission statement for the Department.
- b. Create a priorities statement, based on this strategic plan, that aligns with the Town’s existing mission and values.

Prioritization

1  
1

Resource Requirement



**Desired Outcome 2:**

Improved employee awareness and understanding of the Town’s mission and values and Department’s mission and strategic plan priorities.

Actions

- a. Develop internal messaging that describes the Department’s mission and strategic plan priorities and incorporate messaging in employee processes.
- b. Train and require employees to use established communication tools as a source of information to increase awareness and improve internal communications.
- c. Host Department staff meetings for all full and part-time employees.

Prioritization

1  
2  
2

Resource Requirement





**Desired Outcome 3:**

Improved community awareness and understanding of the Town’s mission and values and Department’s mission and strategic plan priorities.

Actions

**Prioritization**

**Resource Requirement**

- a. **Develop messaging that describes the Department’s mission and strategic plan priorities and incorporate messaging in appropriate marketing channels to showcase how the Department benefits and interacts with the community.** **2**
- b. **Share and communicate messaging that describes the Department’s mission and strategic plan priorities at community events and programs and with community leaders.** **2**
- c. **Ensure that Department communication is accessible to key demographic groups identified in the Town of Silverthorne Community Profile by sharing communications in languages that represent our community’s demographic and by using a variety of marketing and communication channels.** **1**



**Priority:  
ORGANIZATIONAL  
STRENGTH &  
VERSATILITY**

The Department will prioritize responsible use and management of resources. When considering expansion of facilities and services, the Department will ensure that a balance exists between responsible investment and meeting the needs and interests of the community. The Department’s strength relies on the community’s trust.







**Desired Outcome 1:**

Optimize financial, staff, and physical resources.

Actions

Prioritization

Resource Requirement

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| a. Use an established rubric to evaluate existing and new Department services so that they align with the stated Department mission and strategic plan priorities. | 2 |    |
| b. Use an established rubric to determine appropriate fees for Department Services.  | 2 |    |
| c. Develop operational funding objectives, use of space standards, and a cost recovery strategy for each service area within the department.                       | 2 |    |
| d. Identify downtimes in facilities and implement strategies to increase use during lesser used times to balance facility use throughout operational hours.        | 2 |  |
| e. Evaluate existing and potential contracts to ensure agreements include reciprocal benefits.   | 2 |  |
| f. Research and evaluate the department’s ability to create a retained earnings account that allows carry-over of unspent funds from year to year.                 | 3 |  |

- g. Research and evaluate the feasibility of increasing Pavilion profits to fund other community-based initiatives. 3



**Desired Outcome 2:**

Establish trust between the community and the Department by responding to the community’s needs and interests.

Actions

Prioritization

Resource Requirement

- a. Create opportunities for community engagement and attachment. 2
- b. Evaluate and analyze departmental efforts that intend to remove barriers to participation. 2
- c. Implement and apply what was learned through the evaluation and analysis of department efforts to remove barriers to participation. 2
- d. Partner with local non-profits to support their initiatives and increase awareness of the Department’s mission, strategic plan priorities and services. 3



**Desired Outcome 3:**

Increased diversification of funding sources.

Actions

Prioritization

Resource Requirement

- a. Investigate the merits of a dedicated tax for Recreation and Culture facilities and services. 3
- b. Participate in decision making for the allocation of tobacco tax funding. 1
- c. Research opportunities for additional revenues. 3





## Priority: A CULTURE of ACCEPTANCE

The Department will prioritize efforts to incorporate diversity and inclusion in everything we do, fostering a community that values and celebrates differences and a commitment to engaging and empowering people to create a greater sense of belonging for all.

### Desired Outcome 1:

Improved understanding of the community’s demographic profile.

#### Actions

- a. Identify the Department’s current users and compare it to community demographics represented in the Town of Silverthorne Community Profile. Use data to direct services.
- b. Establish a process to collect demographic data from participants to analyze participation and guide the design of services for the community.

#### Prioritization

1

2

#### Resource Requirement



### Desired Outcome 2:

Increased awareness and acceptance of diversity, equity and inclusion among staff and provided services for the community.

#### Actions

- a. Research opportunities for staff or consultant resources to create a diversity, equity, and inclusion program.
- b. Offer staff trainings on diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- c. Work with Human Resources to establish procedures that support intentionally hiring staff members to create a workforce that represents our community’s demographics.

#### Prioritization

1

2

2

#### Resource Requirement



**Desired Outcome 3:**

Increased participation from under-served populations.

Actions

Prioritization

Resource Requirement

a. Use data collecting tools or other intentional outreach methods to encourage feedback from under-served populations to identify specific needs, interests, and activity trends of under-served populations.

2



b. Identify barriers to participation for under-served populations and ways to ensure that Department services are accessible.

2



## Priority: OUR WORKFORCE

The Department will prioritize staff by fostering a stable environment where employees know that their values, interests, and needs are recognized and respected. We will provide a work environment that offers opportunities for development and encourages motivation.

### Desired Outcome 1:

Increased employee satisfaction levels.

#### Actions

- a. Increase internal communication regarding the importance of the annual employee survey and encourage all Department staff to participate.
- b. Use data from the all-town employee survey to evaluate and analyze satisfaction levels.
- c. Set annual satisfaction goals and take steps to achieve them.
- d. Annually review existing benefits package for part-time employees and work with Human Resources to improve when possible.

#### Prioritization

1

1

1

1

#### Resource Requirement



### Desired Outcome 2:

Staffing levels align with workloads.

#### Actions

- a. Analyze existing Department staffing to ensure resources are adequate to meet community interests and needs.
- b. Annually review job descriptions with employees to ensure duties represent current workloads and responsibilities.

#### Prioritization

2

1

#### Resource Requirement





- c. Research a pay level program for part-time employees that is consistent across the Department and available to all the part-time employees.

3



**Desired Outcome 3:**

Increased opportunities for professional development.

Actions

- a. Provide cross training opportunities for full and part-time staff.
- b. Offer staff trainings for full and part-time staff that are specific to departmental operations.
- c. Provide incentives for competencies and certifications that align with work duties and responsibilities.

Prioritization

2

2

3

Resource Requirement



## TAKING ACTION & EVALUATING EFFECTIVENESS

In order for this strategic planning effort to be effective there must be significant effort and resources dedicated to not only implementation, but also to monitoring and evaluating the Plan's execution – taking a periodic look at how the Recreation and Culture Department is doing in response to its intended outcomes and the actions necessary to make these outcomes come to life.

Ways of thinking that can assist in best understanding the need for, and how to successfully execute and implement the plan are as follows.





### **Maintaining awareness**

Maintaining awareness of Recreation and Culture Department's commitment to the strategic plan amongst various advisory boards and committees, Town Council and staff is critical to success – and this must go beyond an occasional presentation, an annual meeting, or sending the occasional email. After spending months crafting the plan and its goals and actions, it is important that the same commitment, drive, and passion that carried through plan development is continued into implementation, execution, and monitoring progress.

### **Building a culture of excellence**

Now that boards and committees, Town Council and staff have an awareness of why the Department is transforming, why they need to participate in the execution of the plan, and why they will assume a role in making sure action is taken, they need to understand that they are ultimately responsible for building excellence. And in order to build organizational excellence, it becomes important to regularly communicate what is working and what lessons have been learned to keep successes in sight and not experience mistakes twice. This includes making sure that actions are being tracked and monitored, and that if something is not working and outcomes are not being met, that change takes place (altering, adding, or deleting an action).



### **Generating and keeping the momentum**

It is critical to keep the fire that was started during the planning process stoked with regular reinforcement and review of progress.

Essential to this end is to reinforce action when it is taken. When acknowledgement and support are not received, this may be seen as apathy and therefore, no reason for staff to continue to work hard and move the needle. And when this happens, any momentum gained is lost. Regular, consistent review of effort is needed to provide feedback, take corrective action, hold staff accountable, and keep the organization on course.

### **Monitoring & keeping score**

Monitoring the implementation of the plan is important for several reasons. First, it helps ensure that the work is being done and that the department is tracking whether it is accomplishing what it intended to accomplish. Second, monitoring gives the department the opportunity to communicate progress. Third, it identifies where problems and opportunities lie and what has changed allowing for corrective actions including adjustment or setting a new course. Most importantly, monitoring demonstrates a commitment to the plan, ensuring the plan's goals become reality.



## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

### Initial Staff Responsibilities

Initiating the implementation of the strategic plan requires that all staff work together to establish teams, leads and timelines as this will be the first step in setting the stage for action.

The department's director and division heads are charged with leading the effort to ensure that the preliminary tasks which follow are satisfied so that the entire organization is held accountable and responsible for implementation and action.

1. Identifying **Teams** of staff members who will be responsible for working on each action towards completion.
2. Identifying the staff member who will serve as **Team Lead** assuming responsibility for the team's work and act as "champion" to ensure that the action is completed. This person will also be responsible for reporting, as required, on the action's progress.
3. Identifying a **Timeline** for each action (e.g., the quarter(s) in which the action is expected to be completed). In the event the action is "ongoing" or is expected to happen with regularity, this should be clarified.





## Keeping the Strategic Plan Alive – A Checklist

The Town of Silverthorne has made a substantial investment in the development of this strategic plan. As such, it is imperative that Recreation and Culture Department staff build upon the momentum, collaboration and excitement generated throughout the process so that the plan remains active and alive. The following recommendations will assist the department in keeping the strategic plan front and center - internally as well as externally.

- ✘ All-staff, advisory boards, committees, and Town Council meetings or open houses should be held to roll-out the plan and clarify priorities, desired outcomes, actions and expectations for execution and evaluation. Similar efforts can be held annually to encourage an on-going commitment.
- ✘ A copy of the Strategic Plan should be distributed to all staff, advisory boards and committees, and Town Council.
- ✘ Timetables should be set for progress-reporting (e.g., monthly, quarterly).
- ✘ Forums or methods for electronic reporting should be developed (e.g., Access, Smartsheet, Board meetings, staff meetings). This should include establishing mechanisms for updating the document itself.
- ✘ Hold All-Staff strategic plan update meetings on a quarterly basis requiring that all Leads listed in the plan report out on progress made for the actions for which they are responsible.
- ✘ Ensure that the strategic plan be a static agenda item on all staff and board/committee meeting agendas thus allowing it to be front and center at all times.
- ✘ Update stakeholder groups quarterly or semi-annually on plan progress via meetings, website, etc., ensuring transparency.
- ✘ The plan should act as evaluation criterion for staff performance reviews.
- ✘ At the conclusion of each year or in-line with the Town's budget process, previous and subsequent year's goals and actions should be reviewed to determine relevance moving forward. Adjustments should be made as necessary and appropriate.
- ✘ At the conclusion of each year, prepare an annual report which details progress. Report on and distribute as appropriate.
- ✘ An electronic parking lot may be created for the collection of ideas, concepts, etc., to help strengthen the plan and assist with the development of new priorities, goals, and actions for subsequent years.





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