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Purpose of the strategic plan

The purpose of this strategic plan is to better define areas of focus and goals, enable increased and sustainable funding sources, and to assure accountability for the BOD. The goal for the plan is to achieve sustainability, stability and ongoing strategic thinking, as well to enable a more focused approach to Friends of Clark Park’s role in the community.

Desired outcomes:

To establish a clearly defined strategic direction, which the BOD is committed to implementing over the next three years and beyond.

To ensure Friends of Clark Park (FoCP) has an effective action plan for 2020 to 2022.

Note: This strategic plan is a guidance map that, when followed, will ensure FoCP effectively executes its Mission. The BOD recognizes that this “map” will need updating regularly in order to accurately represent the changing landscape and needs of the community as they relate to Clark Park and the neighboring community.

Vision, Mission and Strategy

Vision	A Clark Park which embraces everybody and enhances the health and happiness of its neighborhood
Mission	FoCP is an all-volunteer organization. We partner with the neighboring community and with Philadelphia Parks and Recreation (PPR) with the goal to maintain and enhance the physical aspects and cultural opportunities of Clark Park.
Strategy	FoCP implements its mission through volunteerism, partnerships, innovative programming, advocacy and financial support

Overarching Goals

- Create a new master plan for Clark Park that incorporates FoCP’s vision and enhances the condition, features and recreational value of the park.
- Elevate FoCP’s profile in the community by creating clear and consistent communications and implementing strategies to raise greater awareness of FoC’s mission, activities and funding needs.
- Maintain and improve the physical appearance of the park and its features.
- Assure a diversified funding stream, including reaching more members to further expand FoCP’s contributions to Clark Park
- Create inclusive programming and recreational opportunities and assure the long-term benefits of Clark Park to the community.
- Increase awareness and understanding among local decision makers of the importance of providing appropriate funding, resources and interventions.
- Maintain a well-governed and fiscally sound organization with effective, engaged and empowered leadership and sufficient resources and systems to support FoCP’s work.

Organizational Structure

Communications	Programs	Projects	Maintenance	Advocacy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create tools that better support the purpose and goals of FoCP • Create communication tools that promote Clark Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create cultural and recreational programming that is meaningful for the surrounding community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a New Master Plan for Clark Park with focus on B and C Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand and diversify gardens • Regular clean-up • Repair and maintenance of physical infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobby City and PPR to implement necessary repairs to the infrastructure and Plants... • Lobby to address the homeless problem in CP

Organizational Excellence	Fund Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the Board structure to align with strategic goals of FoCP • Update Bylaws to reflect the current needs and structure of FoCP • Establish and maintain a diverse and inclusive board of directors. • Ensure secure and sustainable organization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merchandising: Streamline technology and merchandise • Improve tracking and retention of membership. Improve member recruitment. • Diversify fundraising and establish an endowment.

Action Plan and Projects

Communications

- **Survey the Neighborhood about Clark Park**
 - Gather information from the community by survey to understand what the community's priorities and usage of Clark Park is so that the Friends can use this data to inform our goals and actions. Short term is to create this survey and distribute it, but long term would be to maintain it to be used as an annual process the friends conducts to stay in touch with the community.

- **Send 10 Newsletters per year**
 - Send out 8 - 10 emails/year with one monthly in the peak season and then one to two over the winter. Our biggest opportunity is to pay for an improved email system membership which would allow us to expand our distribution list beyond where we are today. This would allow us to grow and include our soccer and membership database.

- **Update Collateral**
 - Update all of our print materials, table displays, and any postering efforts around the neighborhood, printing the new pamphlet (in process) and table cloth with the new branding (in process). Update any other outstanding pieces and install better ways to display signage when we table. We also should do more postering in the neighborhood for events and table at other events (such as Dollar Stroll). Recruit volunteer staff to cover events.

- **Improve partnership with other organizations**
 - Work more closely with other organizations on cross promotion of events, etc.

Projects

- **Create a new master plan for Clark Park with focus and B and C Park**
 - Details will be developed in a separate document.

Maintenance

- **Gardening:**
 - **Set up a children's garden**
 - Consult with experts to establish a protected area for a children's garden. This planning should include neighborhood families who would be interested in taking part, and these families should commit to working with FoCP to plant and maintain such a garden. Interns in horticultural training would be asked for input, advice and assistance.
 - **Establish a pollinator garden**
 - Establish a bed exclusively as a pollinator garden. Plants that draw bees, butterflies and hummingbirds would add another dimension to the gardens, and would create an interactive space to enjoy.
 - **Establish a better relationship with PP&R Maintenance**
 - Work to establish a closer relationship with PP&R. Crews which do turf maintenance (cutting the grass, edging) to prevent harm to park plantings and soil. Better communication with SMAs and their supervisors to maximize their utility working in the park would also be of great benefit.
- **Infrastructure:**
 - **Make the sidewalks safe and accessible**
 - Using the parks on tap money, work to fix broken sidewalks around the park to make them safer and accessible
 - **Improve the grass and grass maintenance throughout the park**
 - Many parts of the park could use better grass and during the summer the grass maintenance could better. Explore gradual replacement and improvement of grass around the park and to get estimates supplemental lawn maintenance. (Other parks close off sections of lawn for recovery)
 - **Create a tree replacement plan for when trees fall**
 - We have lost many trees over the past decade in the park, and that isn't always a bad thing. However, it seems important for the friends to know when and where new trees should go in. It makes sense that they are replaced gradually rather than all at once in order to provide a variety to the age of the trees.

Programming

- **Add more kid oriented programming to Party in the Park**
 - Add stronger kid oriented activities to the friends Party in the Park. Our neighborhood is very child dense now and the Friends should recognize that enhanced children programming, e.g. will draw more people and enhance the experience for parents if their kids are being entertained for them. A bounce house is an easy idea, but also a kids dance party.

- **Provide healthy programming for the park**
 - Enhance community health and local business partnerships by providing free introductory classes like yoga, kickboxing, bootcamp, dancing etc during the summer. Free classes give access to low income community members while also providing exposure to local business.

- **Kids day in the park**
 - Create a fun/active/learning day with children's programming around activities related to the park. Day can also be used to inform about FoCP, sell merchandise, recruit members and volunteers.

Advocacy

- **Lobby City and PPR to implement necessary repairs to the infrastructure and Plants.**
 - The city needs to perform long overdue maintenance on the perimeter sidewalks of Clark Park and to perform a redesign of Park B. Since the FoCP will need to produce a Master Plan for Park B before that can be completed, the perimeter sidewalks are a top priority to work on.

- **Address the homeless problem in Clark Park**
 - The friends need to formalize their own policy and procedure for homelessness in the park. The policy should fit within the Friends vision and mission for the park and recognize the value of all lives of those who use the park. The friends need to work with Parks and Rec and City council to best create this policy.

Development

- **Merchandising**
 - **Bring more/better technology to the merch table** (see also Memberships Committee goals)
 - Offer easy and reliable payment options, inventory management, membership and volunteer sign-up, online ordering, etc.
 - **Develop training manual for volunteers**
 - Make it easy for volunteers and board members to work shifts at the market table, events, etc.
 - **Streamline Inventory and table**
 - Develop a clear strategy of XXX different styles and colors, display only samples for size and style, reduce legacy designs and colors
- **Memberships:**
 - **Update membership system/database**
 - Unify all data and communications in one seamless platform that can be used by communications, memberships, soccer, merch table, etc. The friends should recognize that the cost of the system is probably not the most important factor. Making sure that we are communicating with our members and keeping the system usable are more important.
- **Fundraising**
 - **Add mostly memorial benches moving forward**
 - Sell the remaining 3 benches as memorials for Park A, and to use the communications involved to create a steady stream of them going in
 - **Establish an endowment fund....**
 - Raise sufficient endowment to fund ongoing expenses on annual basis

Organizational Excellence

- **Create an Organizational System and better define roles and positions and procedures and recruit volunteers to commit to these roles.**
 - Currently most of the Friends of Clark Park is run in an ad hoc manner, with people stepping up to perform tasks as they occur or people heading committees with no defined functions. Much of this needs to be better defined. The roles of each committee should be clearly defined and the procedures for doing those roles should be spelled out. This will make it easier for people to fill these roles, and easier to see where we need help from volunteers, officers and board members to fill in gaps when they arise. Leadership will be in charge of staying on top of current status of how the roles are being filled and looking to recruit more people to help.

- **Establish and maintain an inclusive and diverse board of directors**
 - The board of directors and its executive board should be representative of the community around Clark Park. We should establish a temporary committee to work out what this will mean in practice and if/whether our bylaws should be amended.