



STRATEGIC PLAN



2020-2025
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

JUNE 22, 2020





An August 2018 report issued by Pew Charitable Trust found that *five of the ten communities* in the United States with the highest rates of black homeownership are located in the south suburbs of Chicago. This is a remarkable finding! Olympia Fields — where 98 percent of black residents own their homes — tops the list. Four other towns in the top 10 are South Holland (85%), Flossmoor (83%), Matteson (80%), and Lynwood (80%). Nationally, the Black homeownership rate is only 41%. Two of these communities, Matteson and Olympia Fields border the Village of Richton Park and the other three are within close proximity. Currently, Richton Park homeownership is 49.9% (*Community Data Snapshot Richton Park, Municipality, CMAP, 2019*).

What attracts younger families to purchase homes in suburban communities? According to researchers, there are several quality indicators: affordability, quality public schools, family/kid-friendly activities, entertainment and cultural activities, amenities, safety, and outdoor recreation are most often the factors considered by potential buyers.

What potential does such information have for the Village of Richton Park and its future development?

By 2025 the Village of Richton Park will join the list of majority-Black communities in the United States where Black homeownership exceeds 80 percent. This will be achieved by successfully establishing the Village as a premier destination for middle class families seeking homeownership and a quality suburban lifestyle. Given the Village's proximity to 5 of the top 10 communities on the Pew Trust list, the Village's strong commitment to achieving the goals set in the Strategic Plan, the potential for economic development and infrastructure improvements, and the evidence that many of the quality indicators to attract young families are being met or will be met by 2025, **this goal is well within the reach of the Village of Richton Park!**

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Establishing clear direction is one of the most important duties of a duly elected Board of Trustees. In fact, many governance scholars say that it is the first responsibility of any sitting Board. The Village of Richton Park Board of Trustees understands the significance of this responsibility and has directed the administration to engage the entire Village of Richton Park in a Strategic Planning process. The Board commissioned a series of Strategic Planning Focus Group meetings facilitated by Jeff Cohn, Brave Dialogues, to establish a clear action plan for the Richton Park community for the next five-year period beginning in 2020 through 2025. The following provides an executive summary of the process, results, and ensuing timeline for the established goals.

The Village of Richton Park Community

The Village of Richton Park is a south suburban community located within the Chicago Metropolitan area of Cook County, Illinois.

Village of Richton Park History

The Village of Richton Park (the “Village”) was founded in 1926 by approximately 130 residents. The Village was incorporated in 1926 and operates as a municipal form of local government. The Village of Richton Park operates under the board / manager form of government.

After the arrival of the Illinois Central (IC) Railroad in 1852, developers established a depot and platted a small agricultural village where the rail line crossed the Sauk Trail. In 1926, the Illinois Central Railroad electrified its suburban lines, with Richton as the last stop. Local residents incorporated the village, re-naming it Richton Park. There was a brief burst of real estate development, but Richton Park remained a tiny community surrounded by farms heavily planted with asparagus.

When the IC originally intersected Sauk Trail, the two were on same level ground and Sauk Trail was, of course, just a dirt road. A viaduct was later built to run Sauk Trail under the IC tracks. Sauk Trail for many years had four very narrow lanes going under the tracks. Freehs Inn, which is now in old downtown Matteson, used to stand by the Richton Park train station. It was torn down to make room for the new commuter parking lots back in the early 80s.

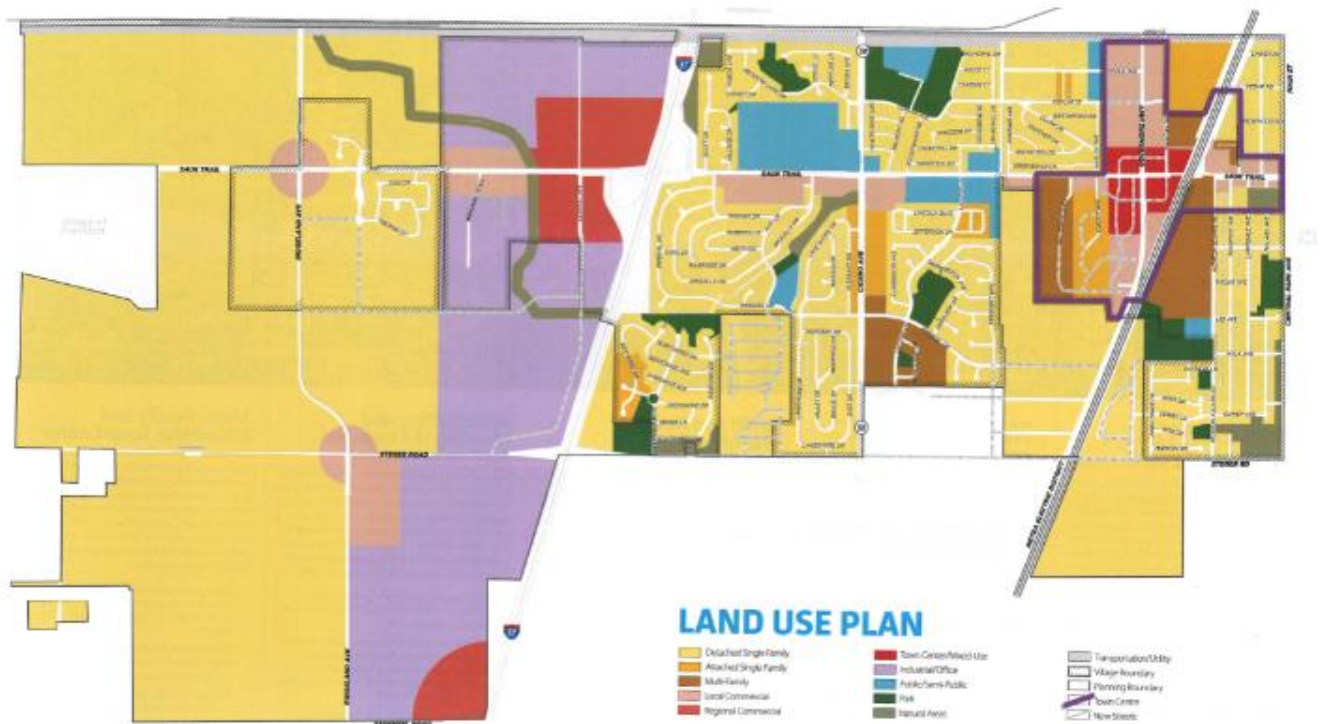
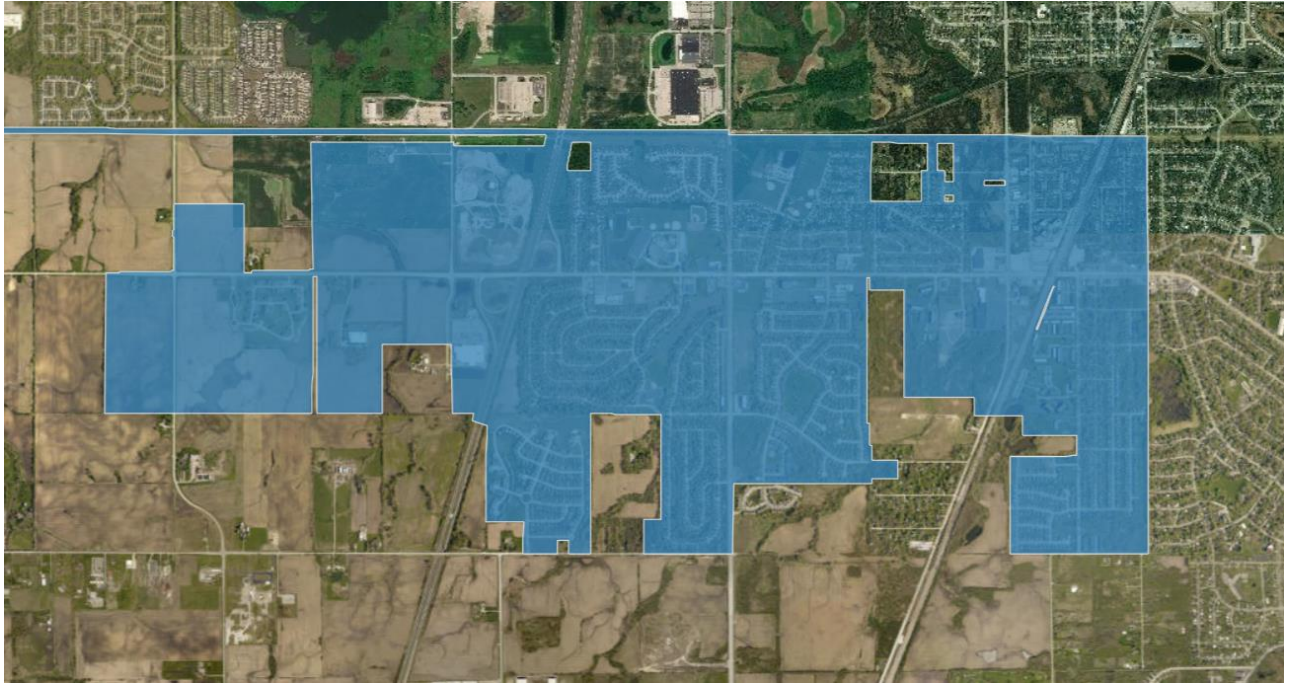
When Chicago's suburban sprawl finally pushed into the area in the late 1960s and 1970s, the Village's population boomed as it annexed new housing developments. There were 2,558 people living in the Village in 1970. By 1980 the population had grown to nearly 9,403, and in 2000 the Village had 12,533 residents.

Geography

Richton Park is located at 41°28'55"N 87°43'31"W (41.481992, -87.725352).[6]

According to the 2010 census, Richton Park has a total area of 3.992 square miles (10.34 km²), of which 3.98 square miles (10.31 km²) (or 99.7%) is land and 0.012 square miles (0.03 km²) (or 0.3%) is water.^[7] It

is bordered by [Matteson](#) to the north, [Olympia Fields](#) to the northeast, [Park Forest](#) to the east, [University Park](#) to the south and [Frankfort](#) to the west.



Demographics

As of the 2010 Census, there were 13,646 people, 5,391 households, and 2.54 persons living per household. The population density was 3,426.9 people per square mile (1,435.9/km²) according to the 2010 Census. There were 4,730 housing units at an average density of 1,401.9 per square mile (541.9/km²) in 2000. By 2010, the racial makeup of the Village was 82.4% African American, 12.7% White, 0.1% Native American, 1.0% Asian, 0.1% Pacific Islander and 2.6% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 3.5% of the population.

According to 2000 census data, there were 4,578 households out of which 39.3% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 47.5% were married couples living together, 18.5% had a female householder with no husband present, and 30.1% were non-families. 26.1% of all households were made up of individuals and 7.1% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.68 and the average family size was 3.25. Between 2010 and 2014, there were 5,304 households, with an estimated 60.8% ownership rate.

The 2010 Census estimated the population was spread out, with 34.3% under the age of 18 and 8.6% of persons 65 years and over. These estimates were a change from those of 2000, with 28.8% under the age of 18, 8.8% from 18 to 24, 32.7% from 25 to 44, 22.1% from 45 to 64, and 7.6% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age in 2000 was 33 years. In 2010, 54.7% of the Village were female persons.

In 2010-2014, the median household income was \$54,887, an increase from the 2000 Census estimate of \$48,299, and the median income for a family was \$58,661. In 2000, males had a median income of \$44,637 versus \$35,231 for females. The per capita income for the Village in 2010-2014 was \$26,566. In 2000, about 4.2% of families and 7.0% of the population were below the poverty line, including 7.2% of those under age 18 and 14.4% of those age 65 or over. By 2010 estimates, 20.0% of persons were in poverty.

Historical population		
Census	Pop.	%±
1930	137	—
1940	107	-21.9%
1950	232	116.8%
1960	933	302.2%
1970	2,558	174.2%
1980	9,403	267.6%
1990	10,523	11.9%
2000	12,533	19.1%
2010	13,646	8.9%
2020	14,000	
2025	20,000 ^[2]	
Est. 2019	13,292	-2.6%

<u>Demographics (2010)</u> ^[3]			
<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Asian</u>	
12.7%	82.4%	1.0%	
<u>Islander</u>	<u>Native</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Hispanic (any race)</u>
2.6%	0.1%	1.1%	3.5%

Education

There are three school districts and one charter school that serve the Village of Richton Park, nearby Matteson, Tinley Park, Olympia Fields, and Park Forest. The districts serve a total of 8,084 students. Four of the schools (Sauk Elementary, Richton Square Pre-K, Neil A. Armstrong Elementary, and Rich South High School) are located in Richton Park.

Matteson School District 162 has its headquarters in Richton Park.[10]

- Arcadia Elementary School (K-4) – 451 students - **Commendable**
- Illinois School (K-8) – 353 students – **Commendable**
- Indiana Elementary School (K-4) – 388 students – **Commendable**
- Matteson Elementary School (K-3) – 406 students - **Commendable**
- Sauk Elementary School (4-6)– 365 students – **Commendable**
- Richton Square Pre-K School – 172 students – **Commendable**
- O W Huth Middle School (7-8) – 525 students - **Commendable**

Elementary School District 159 serves the portion of Richton Park west of Cicero Avenue.

- Neil A. Armstrong School (K-5) – 333 Students – **Commendable**
- Colin Powell Middle School (6-8) – 659 students - **Underperforming**

Rich Township High School District 227 serves the community. Rich South High School is the designated high school, although students who reside in neighborhoods east of Governors Highway and west of Central Park Avenue attend Rich Central High School in Olympia Fields.

- Rich South High – 902 – **Commendable**

Southland Charter District

- School Southland College Preparatory Charter High School – 549 - **Exemplary**

What is the Illinois Report Card? The federal Every Student Succeeds Act requires states to provide a **summative designation** to each school with the required indicators, beginning in 2018. The Illinois State Board of Education annually releases a report card that shows how each school, district, and the state is performing on a wide range of educational goals. The Illinois Report Card has two main components: the At-a-Glance Report that provides important information about each school or district in a one-page, printable format; and the online report card that delivers in-depth information with explanations of each indicator available.

Summative Designation

Exemplary	Schools performing in the top 10 percent of schools statewide, with no underperforming student groups .
Commendable	A school that has no underperforming student groups , a graduation rate greater than 67 percent, and whose performance is not in the top 10 percent of schools statewide.
Underperforming	A school in which one or more student groups is performing at or below the level of the “all students” group in the lowest performing 5 percent of schools.
Lowest Performing	A school that is in the lowest-performing 5 percent of schools in Illinois and any high school with a graduation rate of 67 percent or less .

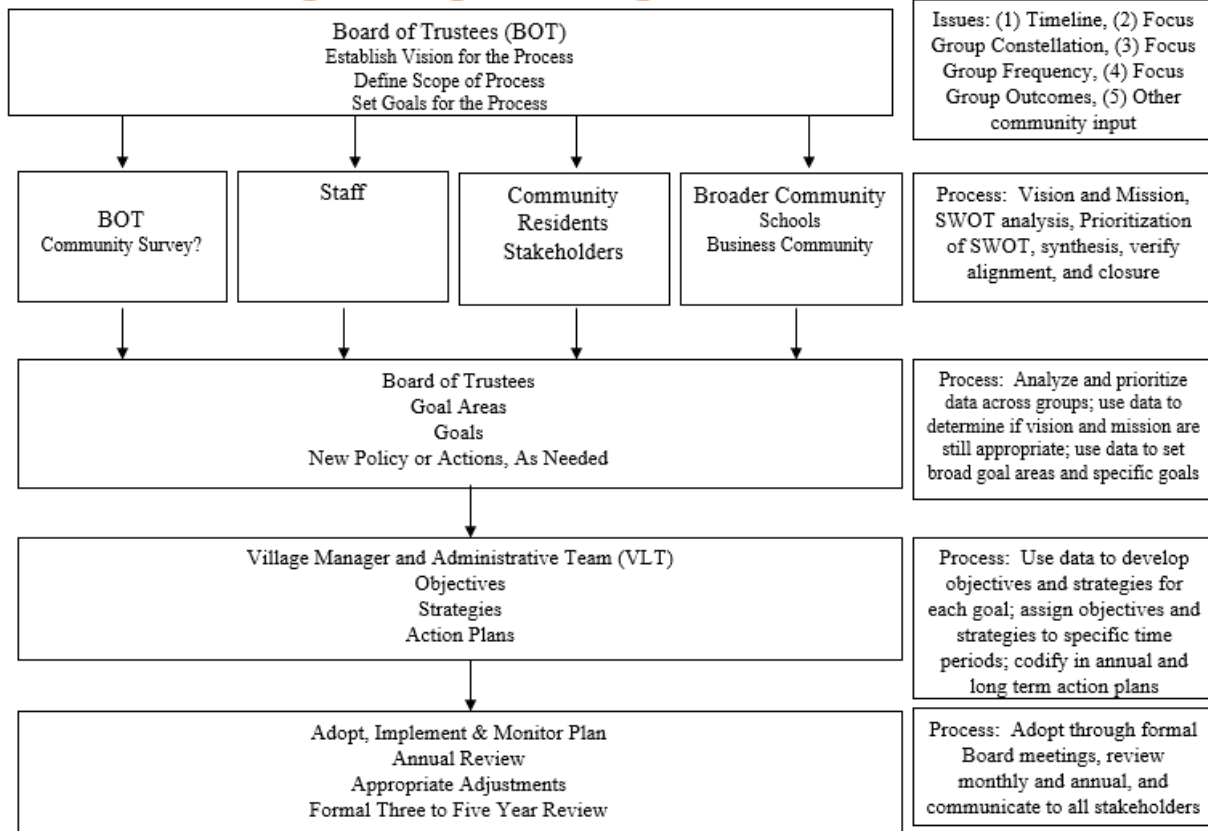
The Summative Designations of each school is extremely important to the growth of the Village of Richton Park. The Village’s Core Value and Vision Statements call for Richton Park to partner with the schools and the community to create students with unlimited potential. Future economic development will rely tremendously on the continuous progress of the 5 schools, year over year.

The Strategic Planning Process:

The strategic planning process included extensive outreach with stakeholders invited to participate in both focus groups and surveys. Board of Trustees, stakeholders, employees, community and leadership input provided the base data that shaped the Village’s Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is intended to provide a framework for future decision-making that builds upon a common mission, vision, and core values statement held by the Village of Richton Park.

The Board owns the process!

Village Strategic Planning Process



The Village held six (6) Strategic Planning Focus Group meetings between the months of January and March of 2020. Just over 100 stakeholders participated in the sessions. The sessions were held on the following dates:

January 6, 2020	Present the Strategic Plan Process to the Board
January 14, 2020	Open on-line Survey – Survey Monkey
January 15, 2020 AM/PM	Interviews: 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM
January 15, 2020 Evening	Community Focus Group: 6:30 PM – 9:30 PM
January 22, 2020	Administrative Retreat: 8:30 AM – 12:30 PM
January 23 2020	Interviews: 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM

January 29, 2020	Community Focus Group: 6:30 PM – 9:30 PM
February 3, 2020	Close On-Line Survey: Midnight
February 7/8, 2020	Board – Administration Retreat: 8:30 AM – 3:00 PM

The process began with the Board of Trustees on January 6, 2020. The Board was interviewed by the facilitator to examine the Village’s current Core Values, Mission, and Vision Statements. All Board Members, as well as the Village Manager, were in attendance during the interview/workshop. The majority of the workshop was focused on the Board’s development of new Core Values, Mission, and Vision Statements for the strategic plan. The Village Manger presented a compressed state-of-the-Village report to inform the Board’s thinking.

The facilitator led the Board through the process of developing new Core Values, Mission, and Vision Statements. The Board’s discussion allowed them to develop a set of Core Values that reflected the entire Board of Trustees. After extensive discussions, the Board created the following Core Values:

We value:

- The youth in our community and believe that they have unlimited potential and possibilities.
- Community involvement from our stakeholders.
- Inclusiveness and diversity.
- Economic development from a 21st century perspective.
- A safe community for all residents, businesses, and community partners.
- A clean community.
- The commitment to being a trustworthy community with integrity that produces ethical behaviors by everyone.
- Financial responsibility by providing our residents with clear and consistent fiscal transparency.

The above Core Values represent, in some form, each Board Member’s input synthesized into eight (8) statements. The facilitated process allowed each Trustee to participate in an extensive conversation about the values that were important to them individually and collectively and as a Board. These Core Values represent the cornerstone and foundation of the entire strategic plan. The ensuing Mission and Vision Statements were both constructed from the language of the Core Values.

The following Mission and Vision Statements were established during the same meeting and using the same process used to create the Core Values. The Mission Statement was created first. In small teams the Trustees drafted three (3) different Mission Statements based upon the Core Values. They merged the three draft statements into one Mission Statement. The Board of Trustees created the following Mission Statement:

The Village of Richton Park endeavors to improve the quality of life through ethical leadership, fiscal responsibility, inclusiveness, effective communication, and economic prosperity that yields a sustainable and vibrant community.

The Vision Statement was crafted using both the Core Values and Mission Statement. The following Vision Statement was developed:

By 2025 the Village of Richton Park will be a premier community by committing to providing a safe, resident and business-friendly environment, high quality services, partnerships that yield excellent schools, and a responsive government that makes Richton Park the place where people want to live, work, and play.

The Board asked the administration to further edit all of the statements and bring back to them their final recommendations to the January 6, 2020 Board meeting.

At the January 13, 2020 Board meeting, the Board reviewed a draft of the Core Values, Mission and Vision Statements and made additional modifications, which are reflected in the above statements. These statements will be adopted by the Board along with the full 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.

The Assignment:

The Village of Richton Park (VORP) stakeholders were guided through a SWOT process to determine the Strategic Priorities for the entire Village of Richton Park Community. An independent facilitator was used for the entire process. Each focus group was taken through a 3-hour session. In the SWOT analysis, the “S” and “W” represent strengths and weaknesses, and the “O” and “T” represent opportunities and threats. Each of these factors can have both positive and negative effects on the VORP’s ability to achieve its mission. The following definitions may be helpful as you read this summary:

- **Strengths** include capabilities and resources, as well as those things that we do exceptionally well.
- **Weaknesses** include disadvantages compared to the Village itself. These are things that you lack or do poorly.
- **Opportunities** include trends, forces, and events on which we can capitalize.
- **Threats** include events or forces outside of our control that have the potential to affect our Village negatively.

The Village stakeholders were guided through a SWOT process by the facilitator to determine what the Village has done very well and could have done better during the 2012-2020 timeframe. Additionally, the stakeholders were asked to develop broad goals areas and potential next steps for the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.

Each focus group answered several questions during the SWOT exercise. The questions were as follows:

1. What did the Village do that was great?
2. What’s Good in the Village that could be Great?
3. What needs Immediate Attention in the Village over the next 5 years?
4. What will the Village of Richton Park look like in March of 2025?

The SWOT Outcomes:

The SWOT responses are summarized into four tables. Each table came as a result of synthesizing the responses of each focus group to the four (4) SWOT questions listed above for each part. The responses from every focus group were synthesized into each table. This process is similar to that of surveying, except that the aggregated thoughts are the actual data points. The synthesized thoughts with the highest frequency of expression have been captured in Table 2. The survey results are captured in Table 3 and 4.

While the information each of the Tables is not an all-encompassing list of responses presented by each workgroup, it provides a substantial point of reflection and strategic consideration. The information represents a list of the things that the stakeholders deem significant for the future.

Table 2

Summary of SWOT

Strength – 46

<u>Item Mentioned</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Item Mentioned</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
• Good Board/Strong Leadership	9	• Walmart	3
• Positive Image/Visual Identity	3	• Community/Recreation Center	2
• Services	1	• Investment in programs for youth	1
• Available Land/Annexation	4	• Improved infrastructure	3
• Access highways and trains	4	• Updated Fire Equipment	1
• Community Involvement	3	• Develop creative strategies	1
• Small town feel	1	• Wind turbines	1
• Long term residents	1	• New Library	1
• Safe	1	• Newsletter	1
• Cultural Activities	1	• Funding Services	1
• Income	1	• STEM Initiatives	1
• School	1		

Weakness – 50

<u>Item Mentioned</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Item Mentioned</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
• Loss of Businesses	6	• Quality of schools	1
• Low income/Subsidized housing	1	• Communication	4
• Aged storefronts	1	• Infrastructure/Street Repairs	2
• Aging residents	1	• High property taxes	1
• Economic Growth/Development	7	• Population decrease	1
• Cultural Activities	1	• Lack of revenue options	1
• Community Involvement/Participation	3	• Increase level of service request	1
• Lack of activities for teens	1	• Content with status quo/apathy	2
• Public Transportation (PACE)	2	• Lack of unity/teamwork/trust	3
• Less Home ownership/increase vacancies	5	• Lack of follow-up	1
• Staffing issues: Loss staff/recruits	5		

Opportunities - 31

<u>Item Mentioned</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Item Mentioned</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
• Business friendly	8	• Improve level of service	1
• Annexation/Growth and Development	7	• 3 rd Airport	1
• Street lighting in neighborhoods	1	• Job training facilities	1
• Good school district relationship	1	• Attracting more residents	1
• Good variety of programs	2	• Outside revenues	1
• Social media – opportunities for feedback	1	• Bring Metra Station into 21 st Century	1
• More active participation by open forums	2	• New car smell of Walmart	1
• Attracting new and high quality talent/staff	1	• The lead water information breakdown	1

Threats – 42

<u>Item Mentioned</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Item Mentioned</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
• Vacant properties	9	• Outside funding	2
• Lack of business	6	• Home values	2
• Property taxes	5	• Metra Station	2
• Safety crime	4	• Quality schools	1
• Other communities	3	• Climate/floods	1
• Attracting residents/population	3	• Limited shopping	1
• Community Involvement/Outreach	3		

Table 3

Summary of SWOT

What needs Immediate Attention? Addressed within the next 12 -18 months

- Accountability for each RP departments (already formed) to show performances
- Citizen’s committee to oversee village accountability.
- Media promotion – community involvement- radio, website, etc.
- Beautification of village – Public Works
- Infrastructure – Park and Recreation programming for teens
- Update website with attractive photos and positive village data
- Address codes to enforce beautification of storefronts
- Financial Stability
- Aging Fleet
- Communication and Follow-up
- Equipment – Asset Management
 - Aging Fleet
- Staffing
- Prioritization of programs to fund
 - List of things that need to be done
- Infrastructure/Roads/Water/Sewer
- Financial Resources/Reserve
- Economic Development
- Aging Infrastructure

What needs Immediate Attention? Addressed within the next 12 -18 months

- Property taxes
- Economic Development
- Infrastructure
- Community participation
- Small business increase
- Local business support from residents
- Long-term medical facility
- Property Taxes
- Businesses
- Vacant properties/homeownership
- Education on entrepreneurial-ship (creating businesses w/in own community)
- Veteran Memorial
- Local businesses and resident events and engagements
- Staff more accountable
 - Answer emails and calls and address concerns
- Hold landlords accountable for vacant properties
 - Landlords take more responsibility of vacant homes to make property more inviting to potential buyers
- Parks
- Quality of water
- Lawn education – property maintenance
- Streets improvements
- Trash around businesses (Face lift)
- Recruit new, viable businesses
- Engage owners of commercial properties on Sauk Trail to give a “Face Lift” to their property to contribute to the revitalization of the area.

Table 4
The Vision of the VORP by 2025

By 2025: January 15, 2020

- RP is modernized.
- RP is on the move!
- RP is thriving!
- RP most improved village in the south suburbs.
- Most improved infrastructure.

By 2025: January 22, 2020

- 25% of Annual Budget Reserves – On hand
- Water Dept. Water pumps working 100%
- Police Dept. has new facility
- Financial Stability through Economic Development
- Financial Stability
- Economic Development
- Improved Park Facilities/Fieldhouse

By 2025: January 29, 2020

- Grocery Store
- Full-service Grocery Store
- Fiscal Responsibility

As mentioned above the community was invited to participate in an on-line survey. The survey was made available in a paper format as well. The Village received over 125 total responses. There were 17 questions that the responders evaluated using a 1 – 5 “Likert” scale to grade the Village’s survey questions. The scale was as follows:

- 1 – Poor (F)
- 2 – Fair (D)
- 3 – Acceptable (C)
- 4 – Good (B)
- 5 – Great (A)

The below table illustrates the weighted score of the 125 responses for each question. The table shows that the Fire and Emergency Medical Response question # 8 received the highest score of a weighted score of 3.113, and the Economic Development question #17 received the lowest score of a weighted score of 1.174. Each of the weighted grades were consistent with the comments during each of the SWOT Focus Group sessions. The Likert Scale was converted into traditional academic letter grades as represented below.

Table 5
Summary of Survey Results

Survey Area	Question	GPA	Grade					Total Responses
			F	D	C	B	A	
Fire and emergency medical response	8	3.113	0	0	28	53	42	123
Village special events such as Fall Fest, Resident Appreciation Day,.....	9	3.079	3	6	27	31	57	124
Commuter parking, patrol and enforcement of commuter parking	16	2.529	6	10	39	40	22	117
Maintenance (mowing, litter pick-up, landscaping) of public areas	11	2.344	7	18	39	42	16	122
Communications to keep residents and business owners informed	5	2.324	15	21	22	41	25	124
Community Policing, such as Neighborhood Watch, School Resource Officer.....	6	2.308	13	17	33	37	22	122
Removal of snow on streets, publicly owned lots	15	2.176	13	25	31	37	18	124
Parking and traffic regulations	13	2.139	12	16	47	35	11	121
Beautification in public places	17	2.106	15	19	41	32	15	122
Building codes, property maintenance codes, inspections and related enforcements	3	2.102	13	16	52	30	12	123
Zoning and comprehensive planning	12	2.1	10	22	44	32	11	119
Police Visibility and foot patrol	7	1.984	17	25	36	37	10	125
Infrastructure to mitigate flooding and improve drainage	10	1.976	20	17	41	34	10	122
Tree trimming, planting and replacement	2	1.911	16	23	48	28	8	123
Condition of streets and sidewalks	1	1.822	16	26	50	26	5	123
Village marketing to attract new residents and businesses	4	1.209	45	27	35	10	6	123
Economic Development	14	1.174	45	28	36	9	4	122
Average GPA and Totals		2.141	266	316	649	554	294	2079

The above table was derived from the following scoring of the 17 survey questions using the 1 – 5 Likert Scale. Each of the 125 survey participants had the option to answer any of the 17 questions using the Likert scale. The graphs are in the order of the strongest response to the weakest. As you will observe the bottom six lowest scores were: Economic Development, Village Marketing, Conditions of streets and sidewalks (Infrastructure/Public Works), Tree trimming and replacement (Public Works), and Police Visibility and foot patrol. Remarkably, these rankings and scores aligned with the results from each focus group. Nearly all the groups and individual participants ranked Economic Development as the

greatest need for the Village of Richton Park over the next 5 years. Additionally, the need to “brand” the Village through an aggressive and strategic marketing and public relationships campaign was determined to be important.

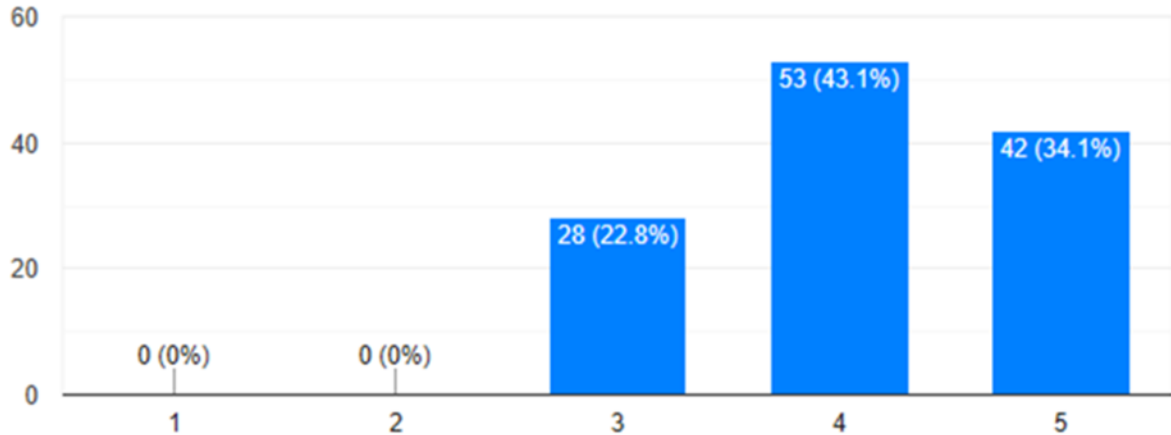
The first set of graphs illustrate the high satisfaction that the residents and stakeholders feel about the great service that they are receiving from the Fire and Emergency Response department. The weighted score for Fire and Emergency Response was a 3.117, which was a B+ grade for this department and service.

The overall and weighted score for all the 17 questions was 2.141 – a low C, but still acceptable overall. The survey responses provided useful information for the Strategic Planning Process. The data confirmed the learnings that were gathered during the 6 Focus Groups, 30 individual interviews and a special meeting of the Board of Trustees and the Village Leadership Team. Below you will find the outcomes from all the data points collected during the Strategic Planning Process.

Table 6
Survey Results

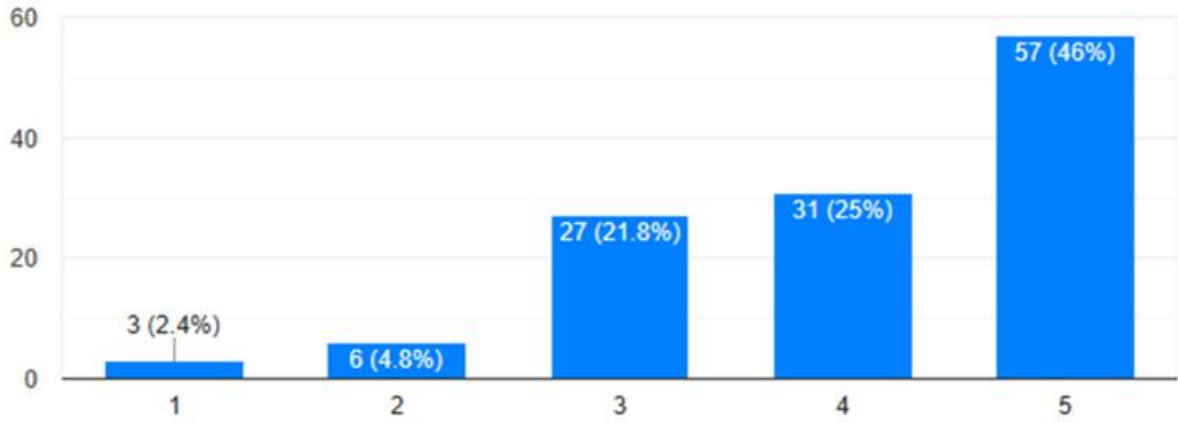
Fire and emergency medical response

123 responses



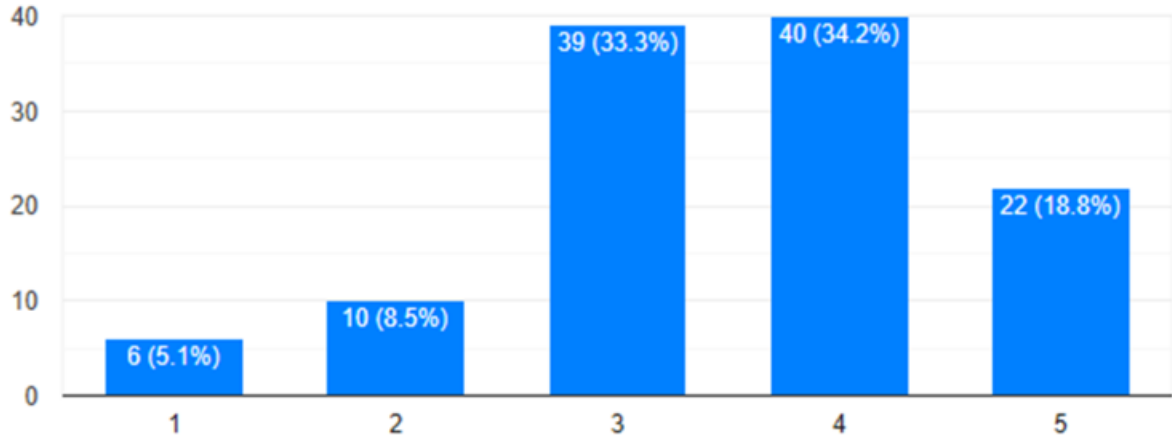
Village special events, such as Fall Fest, Resident Appreciation Day, National Night Out and other community gatherings

124 responses



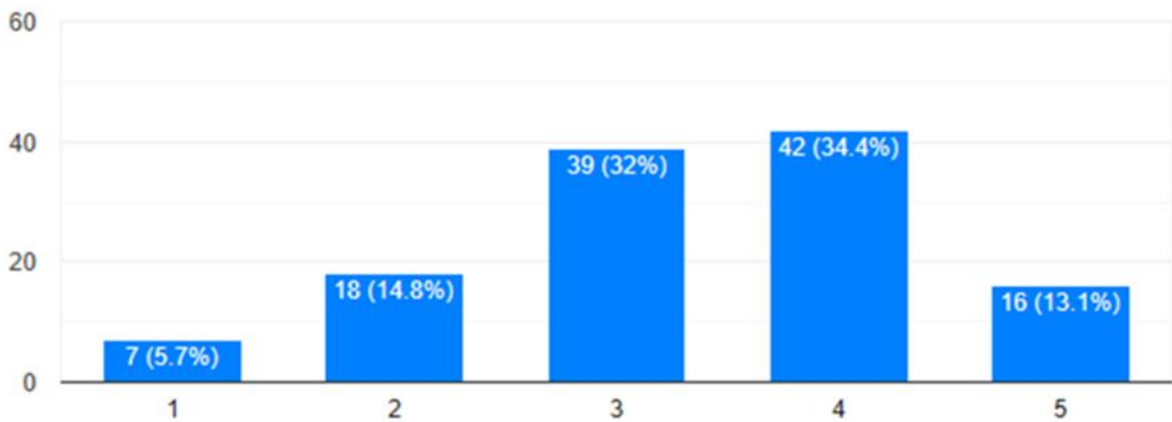
Commuter parking, patrol and enforcement of commuter parking.

117 responses



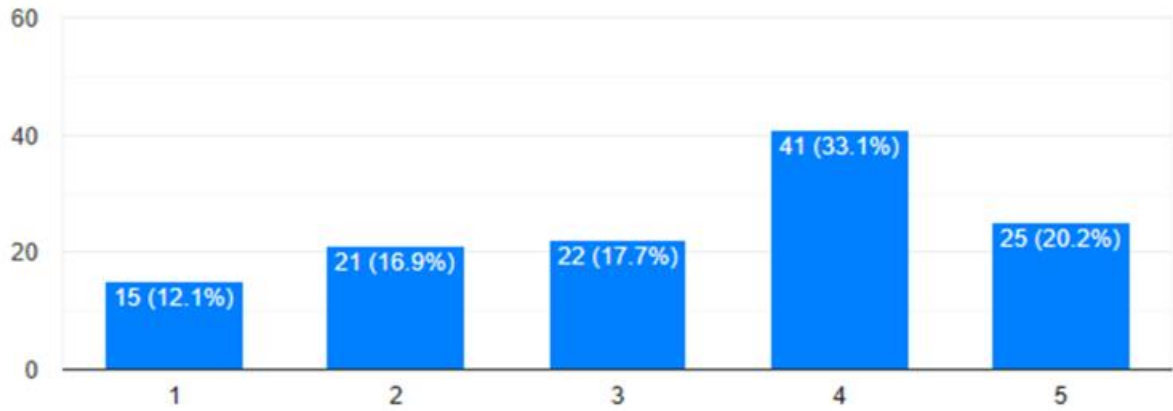
Maintenance (mowing, litter pick up, landscaping) of public areas, and other village-owned properties)

122 responses



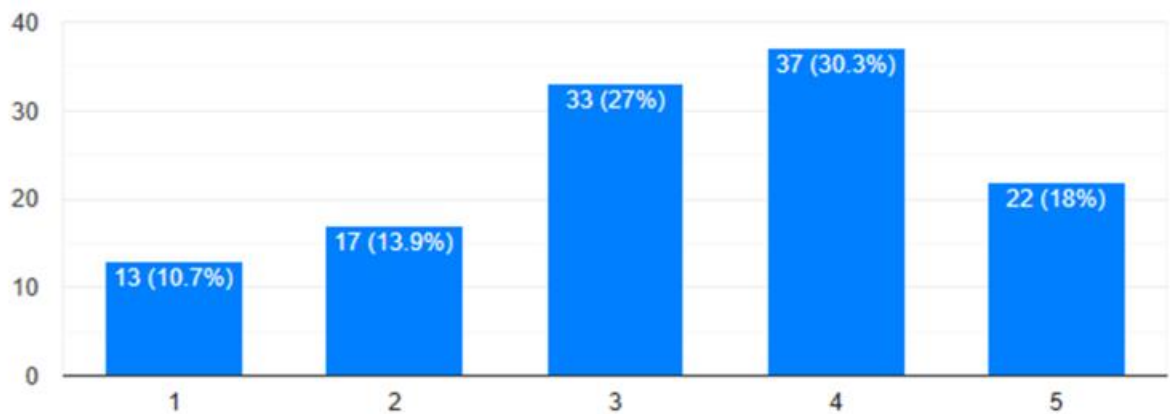
Communications to keep residents and business owners informed, such as the newsletter, social media and website

124 responses



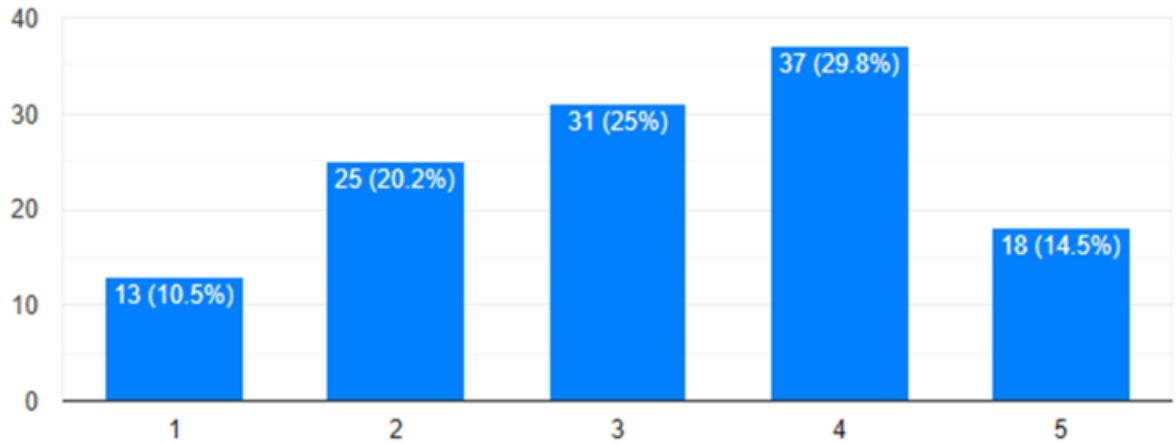
Community Policing, such as Neighborhood Watch, School Resource Officer (SRO), Citizens Police Academy, National Night Out and bicycle patrol

122 responses



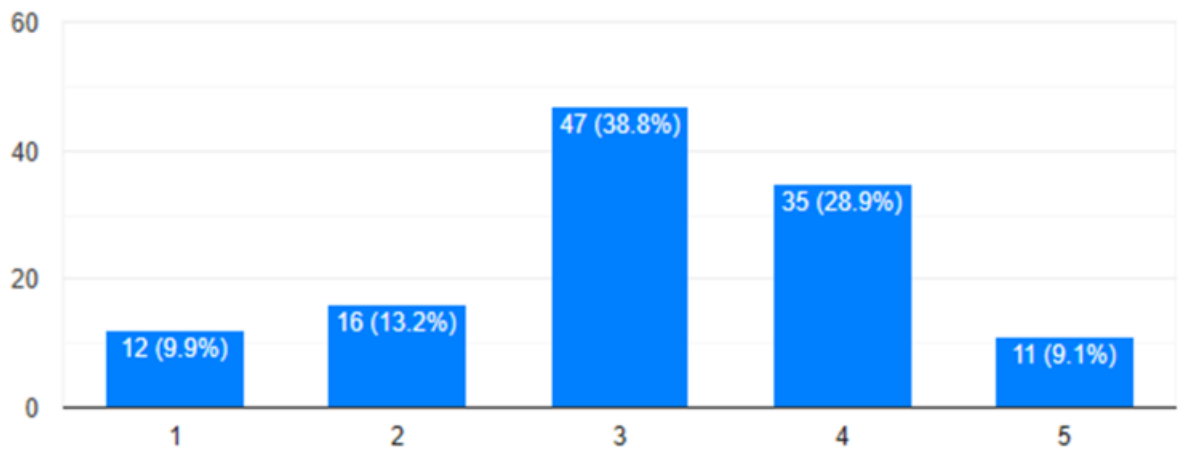
Removal of snow on streets, publicly-owned parking lots.

124 responses



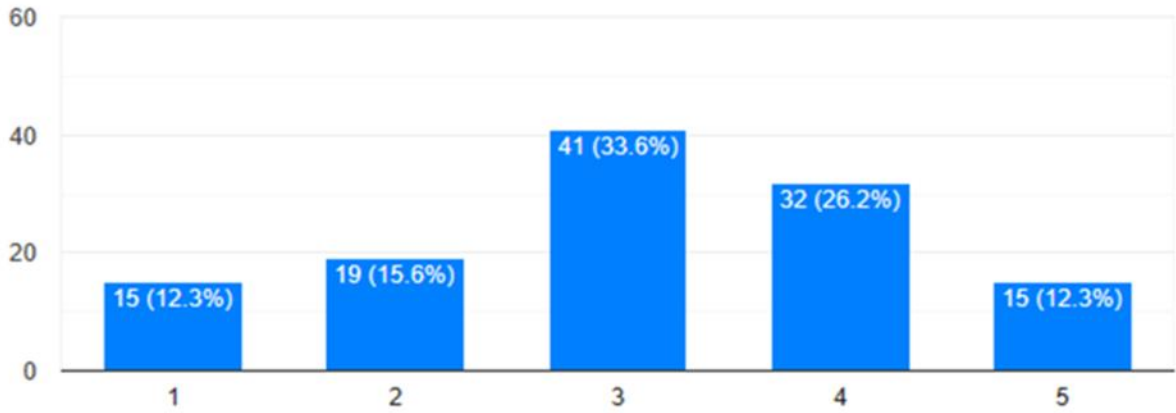
Parking and traffic regulations

121 responses



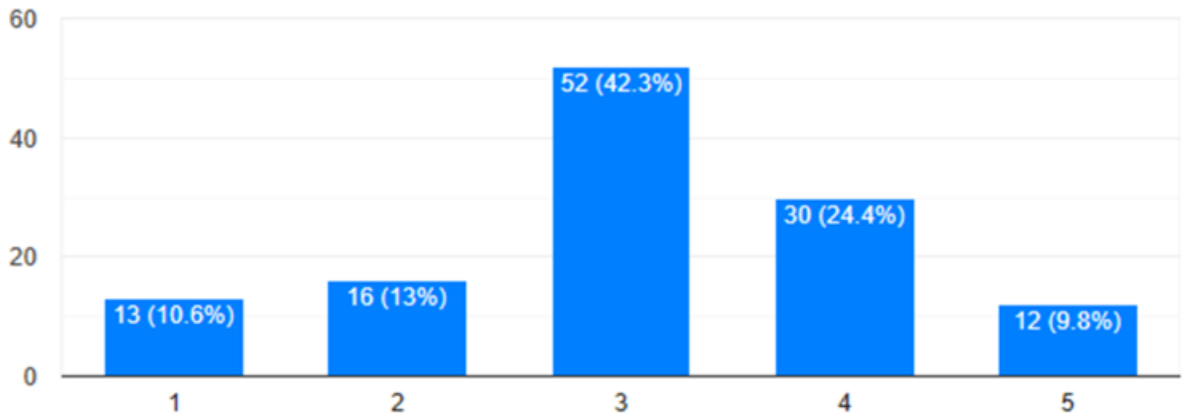
Beautification in public places (planting flowers, traffic island landscaping, flower baskets, etc.)

122 responses



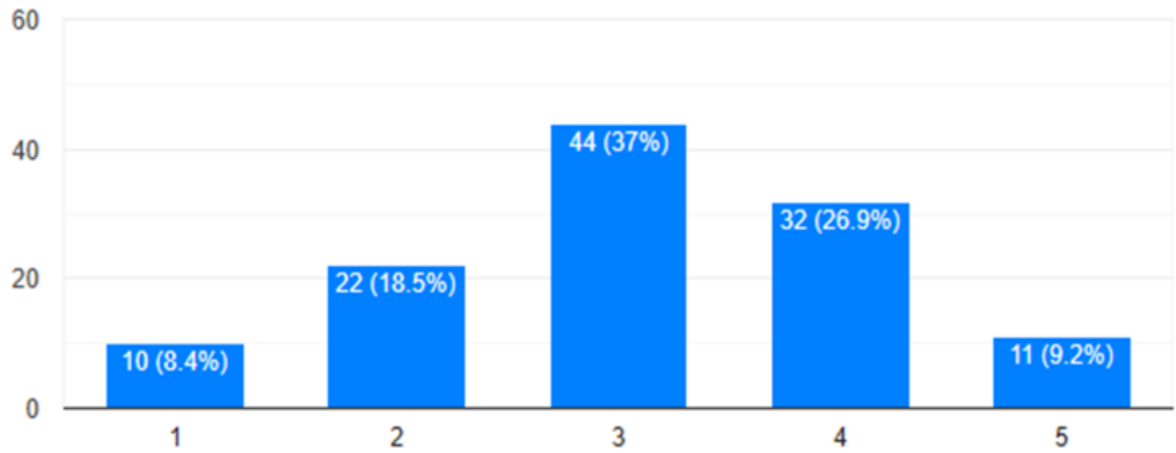
Building codes, property maintenance codes, inspections and related enforcement

123 responses



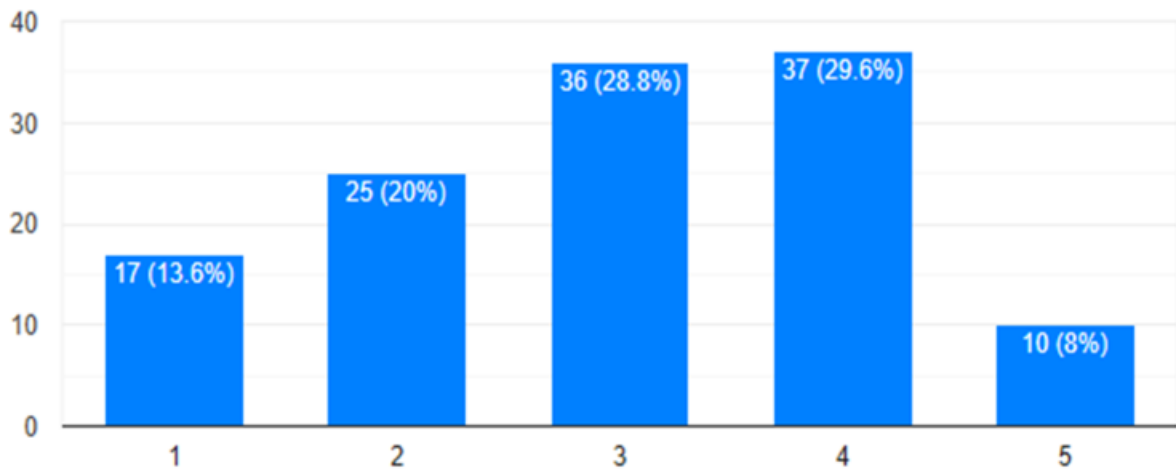
Zoning and comprehensive planning

119 responses



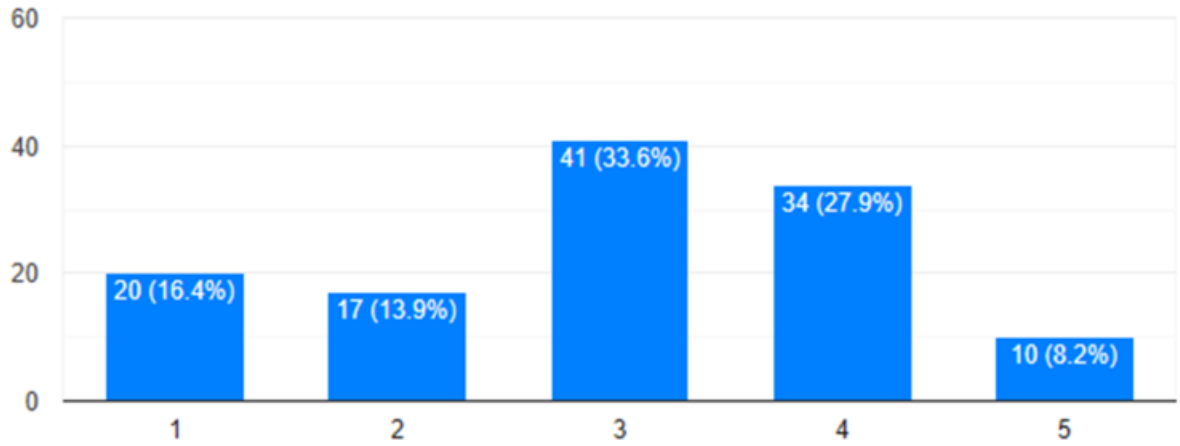
Police visibility and foot patrol

125 responses



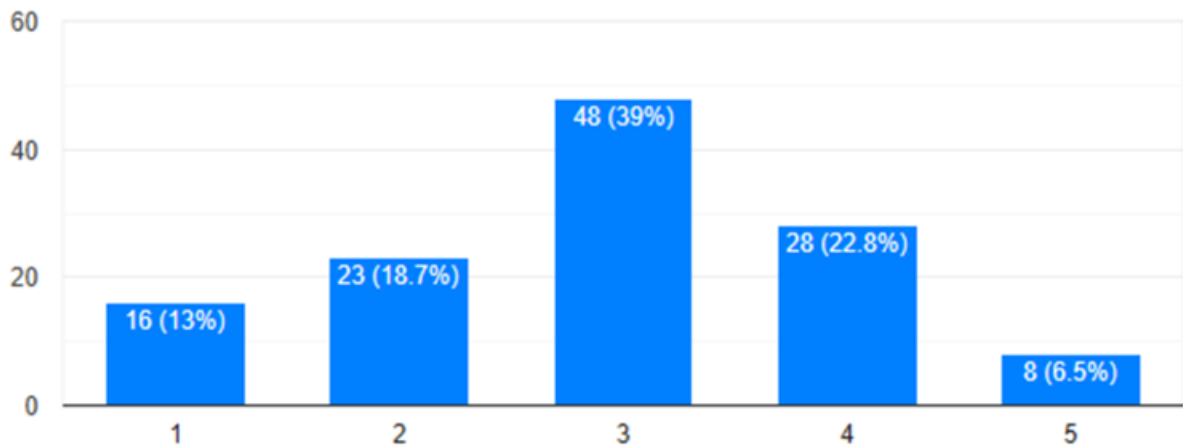
Infrastructure to mitigate flooding and improve drainage

122 responses



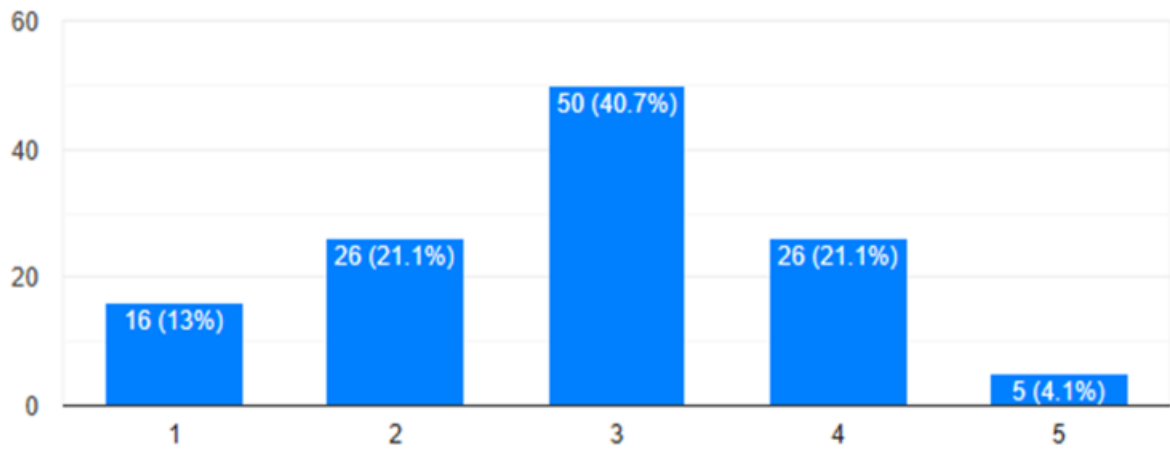
Tree trimming, planting and replacement

123 responses



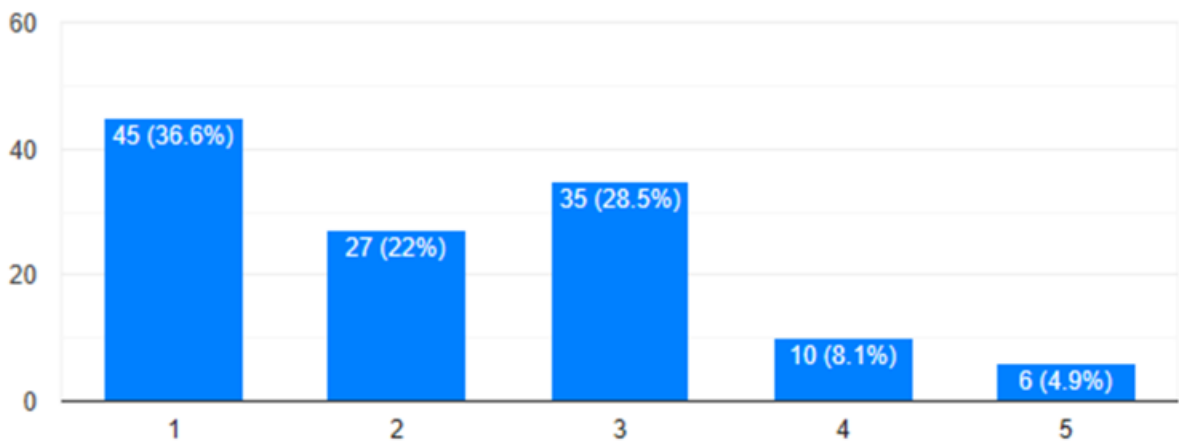
Condition of streets and sidewalks

123 responses



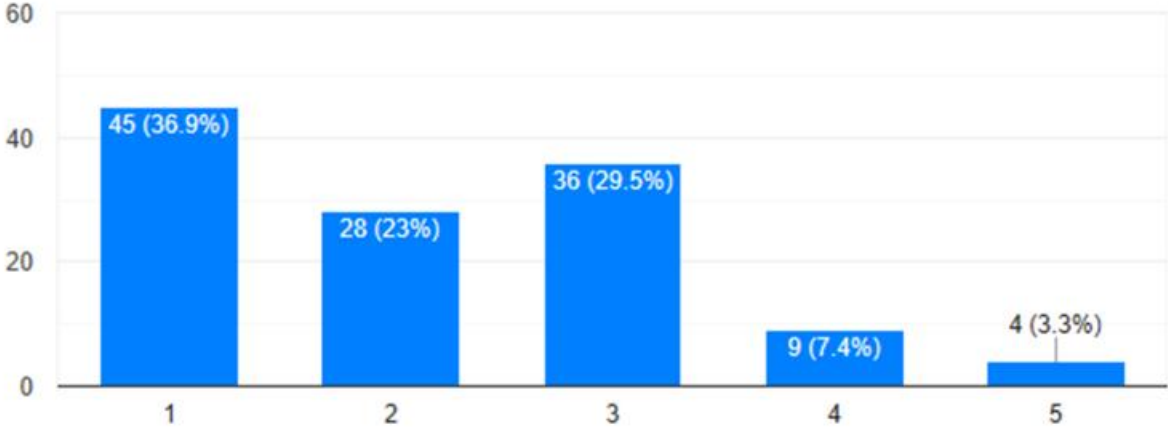
Village marketing to attract new residents and businesses

123 responses



Economic development

122 responses



The Outcomes:

There were five major themes that evolved from the SWOT process and appeared frequently after synthesizing the responses of the focus groups and the Online Survey. They are as follows:

1. Economic Development
2. Financial Stability
3. Infrastructure/Public Works
4. Public Safety
5. Marketing/Public Relations

The combined synthesis of both parts of the SWOT of all groups bore a list of comprehensive and compelling strategic suggestions for the Village Leadership Team (VLT) to consider when writing the new 2020-2025 Strategic Plan. Each focus group nearly agreed upon the same strategic priorities.

Goal Areas

Economic Development: Expand economic development opportunities in strategic locations in Richton Park that improve shopping and entertainment options, local job opportunities and Village fiscal capacity.

Financial Stability: Stabilize and strengthen all financial positions of the Village of Richton Park.

Infrastructure: To maintain and improve the existing infrastructure that is safe and reliable for our residents, businesses, and community partners.

Public Safety: To enhance and expand Village of Richton Park public safety services throughout the community.

Marketing/PR: Make the Village of Richton Park a premier community through increased brand recognition and strategic marketing.

Goal Area: Economic Development

Goal 1.0: Expand economic development opportunities in strategic locations in Richton Park that improve shopping and entertainment options, local job opportunities and Village fiscal capacity.

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
1.1: Develop up to 100 dwelling units within the Town Center area.	Strategy 1.1.1: Identify Richton Park’s market niche for Town Center residential development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Complete residential market study to identify niche market and update regularly as needed ii. Utilize residential/mixed use market analysis data, and refine and gather new data as necessary. 	CED Director/Staff	Completed, June 2021; updated annually
				Completed, June 2021; renewed annually
	Strategy 1.1.2: Conduct developer outreach to groups that fit Richton Park’s niche and profile.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Develop and maintain a national database of developers and retailers fitting Richton Park’s niche and profile. ii. Regularly attend national and local real estate conferences to market development opportunities. 	CED Director/Staff	Completed, June 2021; updated annually
				Attended quarterly, or as scheduled
Strategy 1.1.3: Aggressively prepare and market development sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Update a database of Village-owned properties available for development. ii. Incorporate economic development marketing into broader Village marketing and branding. iii. Provide regularly updated information on development opportunities through a stand-alone economic development website. iv. Conduct regular developer tours to showcase development opportunities 	CED Director/Staff	Completed, January 2021; updated annually	
			Completed, January 2021; ongoing	
			Completed, April 2021; updated quarterly	
			Completed, June 2021; renewed annually	
Strategy 1.1.4: Utilize redevelopment incentive tools and add new tools when possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Create a comprehensive economic incentives catalogue unique to the Village’s development needs ii. Utilize data from the Economic Development Incentives Guide to inform use of tools and identification of new ones. iii. Develop business assistance, façade improvement and entrepreneurship programs as part of a business retention strategy. 	CED Director/Staff	Completed, January 2021; reviewed/ updated quarterly	
			Completed, May 2021; updated annually	
			Completed May 2021; renewed annually	

	Strategy 1.1.5: Build and strengthen relationships with existing businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Schedule regular visits to existing businesses and brokers.ii. Conduct regular round-table business discussions with local businesses.iii. Strengthen the role of the Merchants Association by attending meetings.	February 2021; conducted monthly February 2021; conducted quarterly January 2021; updated monthly
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OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
1.2: Construct or redevelop 50,000 square feet of retail space in the Town Center area.	Strategy 1.2.1: Identify Richton Park’s market niche for Town Center mixed-use commercial development.	i. Complete commercial market study to identify niche market and update regularly as needed ii. Utilize commercial market analysis data, and refine and gather new data as necessary.	CED Director/Staff	Completed, June 2021; updated annually Completed, June 2021; renewed annually
	Strategy 1.2.2: Conduct developer outreach to groups that fit Richton Park’s niche and profile.	i. Develop and maintain a national database of developers and retailers fitting Richton Park’s niche and profile. ii. Regularly attend national and local retail conferences to market development opportunities.	CED Director/Staff	Completed, June 2021; updated annually Attended quarterly, or as scheduled
	Strategy 1.2.3: Aggressively prepare and market development sites.	i. Update a database of Village-owned properties available for development. ii. Incorporate economic development marketing into broader Village marketing and branding. iii. Provide regularly updated information on development opportunities through a stand-alone economic development website. iv. Strengthen relationships with large property owners within the Town Center area. v. Advertise developer opportunities in national, regional and local commercial/residential publications vi. Conduct regular developer tours to showcase development opportunities	CED Director/Staff	Completed, January 2021; updated annually Completed, January 2021; ongoing Completed, April 2021; updated quarterly Completed, January 2021; updated monthly Completed, January 2021, updated quarterly Completed June 2021, renewed annually

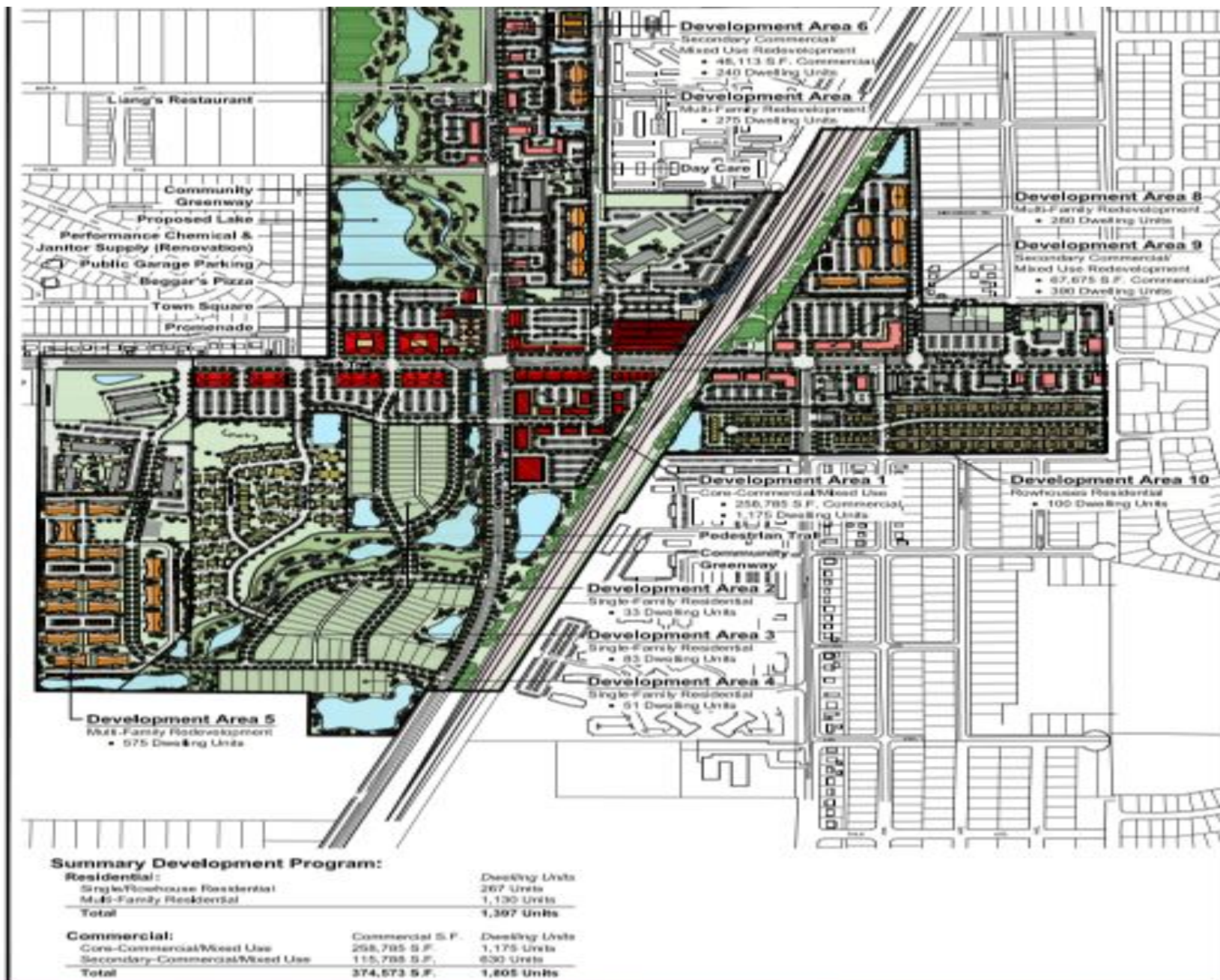
	Strategy 1.2.4: Utilize redevelopment incentive tools and add new tools when possible.	i.	Create a comprehensive economic incentives catalogue unique to the Village’s development needs	CED Director/Staff	Completed, January 2021; reviewed/ updated quarterly
		ii.	Utilize data from the Economic Development Incentives Guide to inform use of tools and identification of new ones.		Completed, May 2021; updated annually
		iii.	Develop business assistance, façade improvement and entrepreneurship programs as part of a business retention strategy.		Completed May 2021; renewed annually
	Strategy 1.2.5: Build and strengthen relationships with existing businesses.	i.	Schedule regular visits to existing businesses and brokers.	CED Director/Staff	February 2021; conducted monthly
		ii.	Conduct regular round-table business discussions with local businesses.		February 2021; conducted quarterly
		iii.	Strengthen Village’s partnership with the Merchants Association.		January 2021; conducted monthly

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
1.3: Redevelop the Lakewood Plaza Shopping Center site with new retail and housing.	Strategy 1.3.1: Identify Richton Park’s market niche for conventional strip center commercial development.	i. Complete commercial market study to identify niche market and update regularly as needed ii. Utilize commercial market analysis data, and refine and gather new data as necessary.	CED Director/Staff	Completed, September 2021; updated annually Completed, September 2021; renewed annually
	Strategy 1.3.2: Conduct developer outreach to groups that fit Richton Park’s niche and profile.	i. Develop and maintain a national database of developers and retailers fitting Richton Park’s niche and profile. ii. Regularly attend national and local real estate conferences to market development opportunities.	CED Director/Staff	Completed, June 2021; updated annually Attended quarterly, or as scheduled
	Strategy 1.3.3: Aggressively prepare and market development sites.	i. Incorporate economic development marketing into broader Village marketing and branding. ii. Provide regularly updated information on development opportunities through a stand-alone economic development website. iii. Conduct regular developer tours to showcase development opportunities	CED Director/Staff	Completed, January 2021; updated annually Completed, April 2021; ongoing Completed June 2021, renewed annually
	Strategy 1.3.4: Utilize redevelopment incentive tools and add new tools when possible.	i. Create a comprehensive economic incentives catalogue unique to the Village’s development needs ii. Utilize data from the Economic Development Incentives Guide to inform use of tools and identification of new ones. iii. Develop business assistance, façade improvement and entrepreneurship programs as part of a business retention strategy.	CED Director/Staff CED Director/Staff	Completed, January 2021; reviewed/ updated quarterly Completed, May 2021; updated annually Completed May 2021; renewed annually
	Strategy 1.3.5: Build and strengthen relationships with existing businesses.	i. Schedule regular visits to existing businesses and brokers. ii. Conduct regular round-table business discussions with local businesses. iii. Strengthen Village’s partnership with the Merchants Association.	CED Director/Staff	February 2021; conducted monthly February 2021; conducted quarterly February 2021; conducted monthly

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
1.4: Attract hotel and retail development west of I-57.	Strategy 1.4.1: Identify Richton Park’s market niche for hotel/retail development.	i. Utilize commercial market analysis data, and refine and gather new data as necessary. ii. Complete commercial market study to identify niche hotel market and update regularly as needed	CED Director/Staff	Completed, September 2021; updated annually Completed, September 2021; renewed annually
	Strategy 1.4.2: Conduct developer outreach to groups that fit Richton Park’s niche and profile.	i. Develop and maintain a national database of developers and retailers fitting Richton Park’s niche and profile. ii. Regularly attend national and local real estate conferences to market development opportunities.	CED Director/Staff	Completed, June 2021; updated annually Attended quarterly, or as scheduled
	Strategy 1.4.3: Aggressively prepare and market development sites.	i. Incorporate economic development marketing into broader Village marketing and branding. ii. Provide regularly updated information on development opportunities through a stand-alone economic development website. iii. Conduct regular developer tours to showcase development opportunities	CED Director/Staff	Completed, January 2021; updated annually Completed, April 2021; ongoing Completed June 2021, renewed annually
	Strategy 1.4.4: Utilize redevelopment incentive tools and add new tools when possible.	i. Create a comprehensive economic incentives catalogue unique to the Village’s development needs ii. Utilize data from the Economic Development Incentives Guide to inform use of tools and identification of new ones.	CED Director/Staff	Completed, January 2021; reviewed/updated quarterly Completed, May 2021; updated annually

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
1.5: Revitalize the Village’s existing housing stock, and attract new housing development.	Strategy 1.5.1: Identify Richton Park’s market niche for new single family and multifamily housing development.	i. Complete residential market study to identify niche market and update regularly as needed ii. Utilize residential market analysis data, and refine and gather new data as necessary. iii. Pursue funding for neighborhood revitalization planning and implementation.	CED Director/Staff	Completed, January 2021; updated annually Completed, May 2022
	Strategy 1.5.2: Conduct developer outreach to groups that fit Richton Park’s niche and profile.	i. Develop and maintain a database of developers, small builders and rehab contractors who can contribute to infill revitalization efforts. ii. Develop and maintain a database of potential infill housing development sites. iii. Regularly attend national and local real estate conferences to market development opportunities.	CED Director/Staff	Completed, January 2021; updated annually Attended quarterly, or as scheduled
	Strategy 1.5.3: Aggressively prepare and market development sites.	i. Utilize tax reactivation, no cash bid and land bank programs to acquire infill residential properties. ii. Identify funding to support residential rehab activities. iii. Incorporate economic development marketing into broader Village marketing and branding. iv. Conduct regular developer tours to showcase development opportunities	CED Director/Staff	Completed, January 2021; updated quarterly Completed, May 2021, reviewed annually Completed January 2021; updated annually Completed June 2021, renewed annually
	Strategy 1.5.4: Utilize redevelopment incentive tools and add new tools when possible.	i. Create a comprehensive economic incentives catalogue unique to the Village’s development needs ii. Utilize data from the Economic Development Incentives Guide to inform use of tools and identification of new ones.	CED Director/Staff	Completed, January 2021; updated quarterly Completed, May 2021; updated annually

	<p>Strategy 1.5.5: Assist current residents with tools to contribute to housing revitalization.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Create and host regular permitting seminars and home renovation programs to provide information to current residents. ii. Revise the Village’s permitting, inspection and development fee structure. iii. Update building codes to ensure excellence in housing construction. 	<p>CED Director/Staff</p>	<p>Beginning January 2021; conducted quarterly</p> <p>Completed, April 2021</p> <p>Completed, April 2022</p>
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Goal Area: Financial Stability

Goal 2.0: Stabilize and strengthen all financial positions of the Village of Richton Park.

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
2.1: Create a Five-Year Financial Plan	2.1.1 Identify Revenue Enhancements	i. Review Surrounding Areas to identify new revenue sources for the Village	All Dept. Heads	February Annually
		ii. Update ordinances to include new revenue sources.	Department Heads	Ongoing as needed
		iii. Continually look for ways to collect debt owed to the Village.	Department Heads	Annually
	2.1.2 Reviewing the current and past financial trends to update a realistic financial picture.	i. Update Parks & Recreation programs annually according to trend.	Parks & Recreation Director	February Annually
		ii. Review taxes annually that can change based on economic development.	Finance Director	Quarterly
		iii. Develop budgetary recommendations based on financial trends.	Finance Director	Quarterly
	2.1.3 Perform studies in the surrounding areas to streamline current rates & determine cost for services.	i. Review utility rates such as water, sewer, refuse and commuter parking.	Utility Billing Specialist	February Annually
		ii. Review fines and miscellaneous fees such as code and parking violations.	Police Chief Planning & Zoning Director	Annually

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
2.2 Implement a cloud based financial system that integrates all elements of the Village’s finance operations to create transparency.	2.2.1 Develop OpenGov Software platform to allow Dept. Heads & Village Board access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Finance Dept. will upload the financial status of the Village (Budget vs. Actual) ii. By second year, Finance will upload on a monthly basis instead of quarterly. iii. Include the public access to the OpenGov platform data with information such as the budget. iv. Develop additional charts/graphs to display financial operations in addition to statistical data. 	Finance Director Accountant Finance Director Finance Director Finance Staff	FY2021: Quarterly Basis FY2022: Monthly FY2022: Annually Ongoing
	2.2.2 Create a Budget that includes public comments and/or suggestions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Implementation of OpenGov to explain the Budget. ii. Within five years the OpenGov transparency platform will be online, to utilize input from the public as if they are at a public hearing. 	Finance Director Accountant PIO, IT	FY2021: Quarterly Basis FY2022: Monthly

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
2.3 Build Financial Reserves of 90 days (approx. \$1.5 million)	2.3.1 Keep operating costs under the annual increase of revenues	i. Stay within means as it relates to revenue to annually create a surplus to be applied to our financial reserves.	Finance Director	FY2022: 20% reserves FY2023 & FY2024: 25% reserves FY2025: 30% reserves
	2.3.2 Annually save a percentage of surplus revenues for reserves	i. Create a budget that allows half % to one % difference	Finance Director	FY2022: 20% reserves FY2023 & FY2024: 25% reserves FY2025 : 30% reserves



OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
2.4 Create a 45-day accounts payable log	2.4.1 Finance Department will be in charge of receiving and allocating all invoices.	i. All invoices will be directed to the finance department with departments checking weekly to input invoices	Finance and all departments	April 30, 2021
	2.4.2 All A/P checks will be processed in a timely fashion	i. Check processing on a bi-monthly term for list of bills. ii. Check processing of utilities, reimbursements and program related on a weekly basis.	Finance and all departments Finance and all departments	April 30, 2021 Weekly
	2.4.3 Finance will assist all departments in allocating expenses as it streamlines with revenues	i. Purchase Orders will be required before purchasing all expenses. Blanket PO's to help control quarterly expenses for reoccurring purchases.	Finance and all departments	April 30, 2021

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
2.5 Create a Public Private Partnership (PPP) to drive Village Wide Economic Development	2.5.1 Look for Grant Opportunities to help assist with large projects.	i. Review grant opportunities to help fund Capital Projects and TIF Related.	Department Heads	May 1 st & Annually
	2.5.2 Work with Village’s Engineer to secure reimbursement opportunities with the state.	i. Review grant opportunities and reimbursement projects that involve the state, federal or other private companies.	Department Heads	May 1 st & Annually

Goal Area: Infrastructure

Goal 3.0: To maintain and improve the existing infrastructure that is safe and reliable for our residents, businesses, and community partners.

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
3.1: Maintain and improve the condition of existing Sidewalks and Roadways.	Strategy 3.1.1: Utilize existing pavement assessment to prioritize areas of repair, resurface, or reconstruction and budget to accomplish 5600 linear feet of improvements.	i. Increase the level of work Village Staff can perform.	Assistant PW Director	Annually
		a. Expand training to perform the work internally.	Assistant PW Director	Quarterly
		b. Perform road patching monthly as weather permits.	Assistant PW Director	Quarterly
		c. Expand training to re-stripe the roadways	Assistant PW Director	Quarterly
		ii. Annual reporting on the status of achieving the linear foot goal.	Public Works Director	Fourth Quarter
	Strategy 3.1.2: Utilize additional funding opportunities to get more work performed with the same budgetary obligation from the Village.	i. Annually apply for known local, state, and federal grants for additional funding alternatives.	PW Director/Village Engineer	Annually
		ii. Continually look for new funding opportunities. Grants that do not open on a regular basis.	PW Director/Village Engineer	Quarterly
		iii. Utilize joint bid opportunities to assist in the lowest contractual price.	Public Works Director	Third Quarter
	Strategy 3.1.3: Public notification on roadway improvements.	i. Notify Citizens about the construction that is scheduled to be improved	Public Works Director / Public Media Coordinator	Monthly
a. Social media				
b. Publications				
	c. In-person presentations			

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
3.2: Maintain the Water Distribution System	Strategy 3.2.1: Implement and budget for Replacement of known problematic areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. List / update the known sections of water mains that need to be replaced and address in the Capital Improvement Plan ii. When funding is available, budget accordingly to accomplish the phasing schedule of the CIP. 	PW Director/Village Engineer Public Works Director	Fourth Quarter Fourth Quarter
	Strategy 3.2.2: Utilize additional funding opportunities to get more work performed with the same budgetary obligation from the Village.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Annually apply for known local, state and federal grants for additional funding alternatives. ii. Continually look for new funding opportunities. Grants that do not open on a regular basis. iii. Utilize Joint bid opportunities to assist in the lowest contractual price. 	PW Director/Village Engineer PW Director/Village Engineer Public Works Director	Annually Quarterly Quarterly
	Strategy 3.2.3: Maintain the existing distribution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Annually flush the water system. ii. Provide training to all personnel who will be turning valves on proper operation of fire hydrants to prevent pressure surges (water hammer) that can cause stress on the water lines. 	Assistant PW Director Assistant PW Director	Third Quarter Third Quarter
	Strategy 3.2.4: Maintain the existing Fire Hydrants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Inspect all fire hydrants for proper operation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Coordinate / inform the Fire Department on out of service hydrants. b. Budget to repair all out of service fire hydrants. ii. Provide training to the Fire Department on proper operation of fire hydrants to prevent pressure surges (water hammer) that can cause stress on the water lines. iii. Develop a standard operating procedure for Fire 	Assistant PW Director Assistant PW Director Director of Public Works Assistant PW Director Assistant PW	Third Quarter Third Quarter Fourth Quarter Second Quarter Fourth Quarter FY21

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
3.3 Improve existing Storm water and Sanitary Sewer System	Strategy 3.3.1: Sanitary system evaluation	i. Continue the implementation of the MWRD Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) program guidelines	Public Works Director	Fourth Quarter FY21
		a. Budget annually to finish evaluating the 20% requirement of our sanitary sewer system.	Public Works Director	Fourth Quarter
		b. Report annually to MWRD the MS4 (Storm Water) report	Public Works Director	Fourth Quarter
		ii. Remediate known problematic (or identified) areas of the sanitary sewer system	Assistant PW Director	Quarterly
		a. Training personnel to accomplish maintenance repairs in-house.	Assistant PW Director	Quarterly
		b. Budget accordingly to accomplish this task.	Public Works Director	Fourth Quarter
		iii. Perform cleaning of the Sanitary Sewer System.	Assistant PW Director	Monthly
		a. Known areas of backups will be cleaned monthly or more frequent as needed.	Assistant PW Director	Monthly
		b. Public outreach and education on what to not pour down the drain.	Public Works Director	Fourth Quarter
			3.3.2: Storm water system maintenance to improve drainage and mitigate flooding.	i. List and prioritize failing catch basins throughout the Village.
a. Train personnel to accomplish in-house.	Assistant PW Director			Third Quarter
b. Budget accordingly to accomplish this task.	Public Works Director			Fourth Quarter
ii. Develop and Implement a storm water catch basin and inlet cleaning program	Assistant PW Director			Third Quarter FY21

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Document and perform monthly inspections on Stormwater inlets. b. Document and clean catch basins prior to every rain event. iii. Keep drainage ditches clear <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Annually, remove trees and other debris obstructing the normal flow of water b. Budget to remove drainage ditch sedimentation as needed. iv. Utilize NCC AmeriCorps to assist in accomplishing this goal. 	<p>Assistant PW Director Assistant PW Director Assistant PW Director Assistant PW Director Public Works Director Public Works Director</p>	<p>Monthly Monthly Annually Annually Fourth Quarter Fourth Quarter</p>
	<p>3.3.3: Utilize additional funding opportunities to get more work performed with the same budgetary obligation from the Village.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Annually apply for known local, state, and federal grants for additional funding alternates. ii. Continually look for new funding opportunities. Grants that do not open on a regular basis. iii. Utilize Joint bid opportunities to assist in the lowest contractual price 	<p>Public Works Director / Village Engineer Public Works Director / Village Engineer Public Works Director</p>	<p>Annually Quarterly Fourth Quarter</p>

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
3.4: Maintain and repair existing water treatment facilities	Strategy 3.4.1: Evaluate current and future needs of the treatment facilities	i. Categorize and prioritize equipment/process by facility	Assistant PW Director	Third Quarter FY22
		a. List equipment for Immediate replacement	Assistant PW Director	Fourth Quarter FY21
		b. List equipment that be replaced due to age and no repair parts available	Assistant PW Director	Third Quarter FY22
		c. List equipment to develop a future replacement schedule	Assistant PW Director	Third Quarter FY22
		d. Budget accordingly to accomplish this objective	Public Works Dir	Fourth Quarter
		ii. Develop Standard Operating Procedures	Assistant PW Director	Fourth Quarter FY22
		iii. Develop a preventative maintenance / replacement schedule	Assistant PW Director	First Quarter FY22
	3.4.2: Maintain the water towers appearance and functionality	i. Maintain the existing contract with Suez for maintenance and ascetics of the water towers	Public Works Director	Annually
	ii. Perform exterior beautification of the tower and wells	Assistant PW Director	Monthly	
	a. Schedule mowing, weed whipping, and grounds cleanup.	Assistant PW Director	Monthly	
	b. Continually improve the exterior appearance through painting and planting flowers / shrubs.	Assistant PW Director	Monthly	

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
3.5: Prepare for increased demands on the infrastructure west of I-57	Strategy 3.5.1: Develop a plan for anticipated growth for water and sewer	i. Define the current maximum available flow for water and sewer	Village Engineer	Fourth Quarter FY21
		ii. Update 2003 Basis of Design Memo for expansion of Water and Sewer System west of I-57	Village Engineer	Fourth Quarter FY21
		iii. Develop a high-level estimate of building a new treatment facility and water tower and update annually.	Village Engineer	Third Quarter FY22
		iv. Identify areas that need improvement/upgrade	Village Engineer	Third Quarter FY22
		v. Identify areas that will benefit from expanding the current infrastructure	Public Works Director / Village Engineer	First Quarter FY22
	3.5.2: Develop a plan to loop the water system	i. If needed, identify areas of land acquisition to accomplish this task id needed	Public Works Director / Village Engineer	First Quarter FY22
	3.5.3: Develop the potential need for lift stations	i. Use baseline of strategy 3.5.1 to determine feasibility.	Village Engineer	First Quarter FY23
ii. If needed, identify areas of land acquisition to accomplish this task.	Second Quarter FY23			
iii. Develop an all-inclusive cost estimate and update annually.	Third Quarter FY23			

	<p>3.5.4: Utilize additional funding opportunities to get more work performed with the same budgetary obligation from the Village.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Annually apply for known local, state, and federal grants for additional funding alternatives. ii. Continually look for new funding opportunities. Grants that do not open on a regular basis. 	<p>Public Works Director / Village Engineer</p> <p>Public Works Director</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p>Quarterly</p>
	<p>Strategy 3.5.5: Implement a asset management program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Develop a list of asset management program vendors and set up a presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Get a quote form top candidates b. Budgets accordingly to purchase the program ii. Coordinate with CMAP and SSMMA to import GIS data iii. Research the age of all of our assets and input into the program iv. Develop a replacement program as detailed through the asset management program. 	<p>Public Works Director</p> <p>Public Works Director</p> <p>Public Works Director</p> <p>Public Works Director</p>	<p>Third Quarter FY22</p> <p>Fourth Quarter FY22</p> <p>First quarter FY23</p> <p>Second Quarter FY23</p> <p>Fourth Quarter Fy23</p>

Goal Area: 4.0 Public Safety

Goal: To enhance and expand Village of Richton Park public safety services throughout the community.

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
4.1: Educate the community on the various law enforcement and safety practices and programs.	Strategy 4.1.1: Provide instruction on fire safety for community members.	i. Meet with leaders at the three senior citizens buildings and arrange to conduct fire safety training twice a year for each building.	Deputy Chief Hodges	May and Oct annually
		ii. Reach out to all Richton Park schools to get on their schedule to provide safety education to school aged students during the school year.	Deputy Chief Owens	August thru May annually
		iii. Hold two Junior Fire Academies a year.	Fire Chief	June and July annually
	Strategy 4.1.2: Conduct school safety drills at all Richton Park Schools.	i. At the beginning of each school year, the police department will meet with each school’s principal to get on their schedule to conduct training on ALICE.	Police Chief	December annually
		ii. The police department in partnership with School Districts 159, 162 and 227 will conduct annual intruder/active shooter drills at the five schools located in the Village of Richton Park.	DC Owens	August thru May annually
		iii. The fire department will partner with the five schools located within the Village of Richton Park to conduct and evaluate the effectiveness of their fire drills annually.	Fire Chief	September annually
	Strategy 4.1.3: Offer various types of crime prevention and safety programs to the public.	i. Partner with the Matteson Police Department to conduct a ten (10) week Citizen’s Police Academy.	Police Chief	Sep thru Nov annually
		ii. Continue to participate in youth related programs such as Police Cadet Program Peer Jury, Red-Ribbon Week/Anti-bullying and Stranger Danger.	Deputy Police Chief	Annually
		iii. Ensure each police team provide community policing and other training for community groups.	Deputy Police Chief	January annually

	<p>4.1.4: American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance and notification. Ensure the following is in compliance with the ADA transition plan and is performed annually.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Evaluate and ensure Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance through the community ii. All advertisements comply with the ADA. iii. All hiring practices comply with the ADA. iv. Proper labeling of ADA accessible areas throughout the Village. v. All Village owned facilities are compliant or are scheduled to become compliant is followed. 	<p>Fire Chief</p> <p>HR Director</p> <p>HR Director</p> <p>PW Director</p> <p>Community & Economic Development Director</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
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OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
4.2: Increase Community Policing efforts by providing more police visibility in the community.	Strategy 4.2.1: Have officers conduct daily foot patrols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Enter all businesses in the assigned zone and document who the officer interacted with. ii. Interact with the students in the schools during lunch, recess and at the beginning and end of the school day. 	DC Owens School Resource Office and Patrol Officers	Daily August thru May annually
	Strategy 4.2.2: Conduct outdoor Roll Calls.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Vary the location of the Roll Calls throughout the community. 	Patrol Sergeants	May thru October annually
	Strategy 4.2.3: Interact with the community in a non-law-enforcement capacity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Participate in Village sponsored events. ii. Attend community events and interact with the public. 	Police and Fire employees Police and Fire employees	Monthly Ongoing
	Strategy 4.2.4: Increase outreach efforts through social media and Marketing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Utilize the Ring Neighbors Forum to push out information to the public related to community events and crime issues. ii. Interact with the public through Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. 	Village PIO Adams Police Detectives Village PIO Adams Police Detectives	Weekly

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
4.3 Improve staffing for the Fire and Police Departments.	Strategy 4.3.1: Attend Career Fairs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Colleges ii. Village iii. Surrounding Communities 	Human Resources Department Fire Department Police Department	Ongoing
	4.3.2: Utilize a variety of advertisement mediums to attract applicants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Advertise on Police job websites. ii. Advertise on Fire job websites. iii. Send job opening information to the local colleges that offer Fire Science and Criminal Justice programs. iv. Place articles in the newspaper. 	Fire Chief Police Chief HR Director Village PIO	Ongoing
	4.3.3: Develop a “peer” mentoring program to retain recruits once hired.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Offer new police and fire employees the option of working with a senior employee. 	Fire Chief Police Chief	Ongoing
	4.3.4: Hold Open House and Tailgate events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Fire Department and Police Department host tours of their departments. ii. Fire Department conducts tailgating events in the community. 	Fire Chief Police Chief	May thru October Annually

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
4.4: Fire, Police, Code Enforcement and Public Works work together to address quality of life issues that may lead to crime.	Strategy 4.4.1: Address conditions that are conducive to criminal behavior.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Keep a list of vacant homes and work together to ensure the homes are secure. ii. Police provide Public Works with a list of lights out throughout the Village to ensure repair as soon as possible. iii. Fire, Police and Code Enforcement advise each other of hazards. 	Sergeant G. Miramontes/Code Enforcement Sergeant M. Young All employees from those departments	Monthly Bi-weekly Daily
	4.4.2: Police work with Public Works to address unsafe conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Police report to Public Works road hazards such a pot-hole missing manhole covers, missing signs etc. ii. Police conduct regular checks on Public Works employees working on streets. 	All Patrol Sergeants	Daily

Goal Area: Marketing/PR

Goal 5.0: Make the Village of Richton Park a premier community through increased brand recognition and strategic marketing.

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	ACTION STEPS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
5.1: Develop and enhance Richton Park’s brand to expand residential population, attract new business and generate economic sustainability.	Strategy 5.1.1: Explore Marketing Firms to assist in creating specific marketing strategies for each department.	i. Identify and hire a potential firm that specialize in developing strategic marketing plans for the village	Department Heads & Media	Third Quarter, FY22
		ii. Broadening our Brand’s exposure regionally thru marketing plan process	Firm, Department Heads & Media	Fourth Quarter, FY 2022
		iii. Identify marketing needs by Department	Firm, Department Heads & Media	Third Quarter, FY 2020
		iv. Develop a specific marketing plan for the I57 business development	CED Department	Third Quarter FY 2021
		v. Deploy two billboards at Town-Center	CED Department	First Quarter FY 2022
	Strategy 5.1.2: Market Richton Park’s strong governance and leadership through educational campaigns	i. Create content reflecting the Village’s strong and stable leadership	Department Heads & Media	Quarterly
		ii. Create specific campaigns that will attract potential residents and investors to the Village	CED Department & Media	Third Quarter FY 2022
		iii. Develop a preliminary environmental sustainability plan for the Village	Department Heads	Fourth Quarter FY 2022

	Strategy 5.1.3: Promote low crime rates and Public Safety responsiveness through informational campaigns	i. Highlight “safety” as a marketing tactic to attract families from other areas	Police, Fire & Media	Fourth Quarter FY 21
		ii. Create a “safety” tagline as our motto	Police, Fire & Media	Fourth Quarter FY 21
		iii. Incorporate transparency in safety campaigns for the Village	Police, Fire & Media	Fourth Quarter FY 21

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	ACTION ITEMS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
5.2: Improve public notification, communication, and engagement	Strategy 5.2.1: Provide positive data, easily accessible information, mobile friendly functions, marketable content, and attractive photos to the website and social media platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Use data feedback and positive information to promote the Village’s best practices ii. “Tell our story” of “People You Should Know”, “Good Governance and Leadership”, “Transparency” iii. Use Social Media to expand and engage all aspects of Richton Park 	Department Heads & Media Department Heads & Media Media	Quarterly Quarterly Evaluate Quarterly
	Strategy 5.2.2: Remain current and relevant on all platforms for community and global communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Explore specific tools that will promote efficient community engagement ii. Provide significant data from feedback and engagement forums iii. Track online usage and actions of current mediums with the addition of software data 	Department Heads & Media Department Heads & Media Media	First Quarter FY 22 Second Quarter FY 22 Evaluate Quarterly

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	ACTION ITEMS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE(S)
5.3: Strengthen Community Involvement with residents and business owners	Strategy 5.3.1: Form a resident outreach team to implement marketing strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Set or create specific volunteer initiatives for the Village’s different target audiences ii. Design, implement and train the Village of Richton Park “Brand Ambassador” via in-person and social media iii. Re-evaluate all existing volunteer/community engagement programs and set a plan with specific volunteer and community engagement goals 	CED & Commission/Committee CED & Media Department Heads & Commission/Committee	Second Quarter FY 2021 Second Quarter FY 2021 Evaluate Annually
	Strategy 5.3.2: Develop a plan to engage local businesses and organizations in community initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Create new ways to appeal or attract small businesses organization (Merchants Chambers Association) ii. Implement “Do Business in VORP” campaign that are aimed at Businesses, Developers/ Shoppers 	CED CED	Third Quarter FY 21 Third Quarter FY 22
	Strategy 5.3.3: Expand volunteer opportunities for young adults in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Work with Community Center to create STEM related learning and volunteer opportunities. ii. Create volunteer work opportunities iii. Teach young adults how to coach all sports 	Community Services Human Resource, Community Relations & Community Services Community Services	Second Quarter FY 21 First Quarter FY 21 Second Quarter FY 21

	<p>Strategy 5.3.4:</p> <p>Implement a system-wide approach to measuring customer satisfaction</p>	<p>i. Implement through Marketing Firm Annual Citizen Survey via National Citizen Survey</p>	<p>Firm, CED, Admin, Media</p>	<p>Third Quarter FY 22</p>
		<p>ii. Create a standard survey for all programs and services</p>	<p>Department Heads and Media</p>	<p>Third Quarter FY 2020</p>
		<p>iii. Establishing a “We Fixed It” Campaign based on data from the Community Engagement Software</p>	<p>Department Heads and Media</p>	<p>Fourth Quarter FY 2020</p>
	<p>Strategy 5.3.5:</p> <p>Promote the Village’s Resident Resource Management Program</p>	<p>i. Provide resources for Residential Housing</p>	<p>CED & Media</p>	<p>Third Quarter of FY 2020</p>
		<p>ii. Re-branding of Resident assistance Programs</p>	<p>CED & Media</p>	<p>Third Quarter of FY 2020</p>
		<p>iii. Train all volunteers and Brand Ambassadors every element of this program</p>	<p>CED</p>	<p>Second Quarter of FY 21</p>

The 2025 Strategic Plan will create :

Economic Development – The plan will begin to address the need to expand Economic Development in the Village of Richton Park. This was the area that was most mentioned by every focus group.

Financial Stability – The plan will stabilize and rebuild the Village’s financial position by putting stronger financial practices in place and rebuild the financial reserves of all fund balances.

Infrastructure/Public Works – The plan will ensure that the fundamental public works and infrastructure systems are restored to the most financially prudent state. Additionally, the plan will position and prepare the Village’s key systems for growth over the next 5 years.

Public Safety – Build upon the strong perception of excellent public safety and fire/emergency services and use it to attract potential residents. The plan will also build community policing throughout the entire Village.

Marketing/PR – The plan will build the image of the Village of Richton Park throughout the state of Illinois in order to attract economic development and new residents.

Summary of all suggested goals and action steps by Strategic Priority:

Each of the 5 focus groups had an area or two that they were most passionate about during their SWOT sessions, and they were asked to develop a goal or suggest an action step for that particular strategic priority area. On the following pages you will find a summary of each of the critical areas of interest and strategic priorities identified by the focus groups. One of the key factors of the SWOT process is the frequency of how many times something is mentioned during the synthesis process. Essentially, the items below were mentioned more often than any of the other areas of interest, concerns, and priorities during each of the focus group sessions. These ideas are intended to guide the implementation plan as it is developed by the administration following strategic plan adoption.

What needs Immediate Attention? Addressed within the next 12 -18 months

- Property taxes
- Economic Development
- Infrastructure
- Community participation
- Small business increase
- Local business support from residents
- Long-term medical facility
- Property Taxes
- Businesses
- Vacant properties/homeownership
- Education on entrepreneurial-ship (creating businesses w/in own community)
- Veteran Memorial
- Local businesses and resident events and engagements
- Staff more accountable
 - Answer emails and calls and address concerns
- Hold landlords accountable for vacant properties
 - Landlords take more responsibility of vacant homes to make property more inviting to potential buyers
- Parks
- Quality of water
- Lawn education – property maintenance
- Streets improvements
- Trash around businesses (Face lift)
- Recruit new, viable businesses
- Engage owners of commercial properties on Sauk Trail to give a "Face Lift" to their property to contribute to the revitalization of the area.

Strategic Priority: Economic Development

1. Attract new businesses to Richton Park
2. Develop a welcoming business climate
3. Connect with the existing business community
4. Develop the TOD
5. Expand the I57/Sauk Trail business district
6. Establish a cooperative relationship with the Governor State University to develop an entrepreneurship program to support the sustainability of local small businesses
7. Redevelop 50,000 square feet in the Town Center area
8. Redevelop the Lakewood Plaza Shopping Center site for new retail and housing
9. Attract hotel and retail development west of I57
10. Attract new housing development in identified areas of the Village

Strategic Priority: Financial Stability

1. Establish industry standard financial practices
2. Implement 21st century business applications that allow for online and cloud-based accounting
3. Team with Economic Development to establish a Public Private Partnership program
4. Stabilize all financial fund balances
5. Implement Gov.com throughout the back office
6. Identify new revenue sources for the Village of Richton Park
7. Develop and implement a plan to build financial reserves for a 90-day period
8. Create a 45-day accounts payable log by April 30, 2021
9. Identify ways to collect debt owed to the Village of Richton Park
10. Identify and access grant opportunities to assist with capital projects

Strategic Priority: Infrastructure/Public Works

1. Seek all grants for road improvements
2. Implement operational and energy reduction strategies
3. Prepare all infrastructure and public works for expansion and annexation westward
4. Implement all low cost/no cost infrastructure improvements throughout Village of Richton Park
5. Maintain the Water Distribution System
6. Improve Storm Water & Sanitary Sewer System to improve drainage and mitigate flooding
7. Maintain and repair existing water treatment facilities
8. Evaluate the future needs of the water treatment facilities
9. Ensure the maintenance of vacant properties throughout the Village
10. Identify grant and reimbursement opportunities for infrastructure improvements

Strategic Priority: Public Safety

1. Expand community policing program
2. Use public safety and fire/emergency services and positive safety record as a marketing strategy to attract new residents
3. Partner with residents to create a community of safety and security.

4. Educate the community on various law enforcement and safety practices and prevention programs
5. Ensure that all Village owned facilities are ADA compliant
6. Continue to build relationships with the 5 schools within the Village to ensure the safety of the community's youth, both in and outside of the schools, including Police Cadet Program, Anti-bullying, Peer Jury, etc.
7. Provide more police visibility in the community
8. Provide interaction with the community in a non law-enforcement capacity, including attendance at community events
9. Improve the recruitment and retention of staff of the Fire and Police Departments
10. Fire, Police Code Enforcement and Public Works collaborate to address quality of life issues that may lead to crime.

Strategic Priority: Marketing/PR

1. Build the Village of Richton Park Brand
2. Establish VORP Ambassadors
3. Re-invigorate the HOA
4. Reconnect with all partner groups
5. Develop a strategic marketing plan
6. Working with a selected marketing firm, develop a strategic marketing plan that promotes the positive aspects of the Village, branding it as an outstanding place to live and do business.
7. Improve communication and coordination around opportunities for families in the Village.
8. Create an image of the Village as a destination community in the Chicago area.
9. Community partners are meaningfully engaged in the work and promotion of the Village.
10. All groups feel equally represented & welcome in our community.
11. Develop a comprehensive plan for marketing the I57 business corridor.

Conclusions and Next Steps:

The individuals who participated in this process are to be congratulated for their openness in communicating their responses and opinions. While it is challenging to convey the thoughts and consensus of five focus groups, 29 individual interviews, and 125 survey responses, the same themes and strategic priorities were presented throughout the entire strategic planning process. These predominant themes were expressed in separate sessions but in concert throughout all of the meetings. The most salient and repeated theme was the need for Economic Development throughout the Village. Whether it was a Board Member, a community leader, a resident, or an entire focus group the cry for Economic Development was remarkable and consistent. The top requests during the process were a grocery store, development of the Metra TOD, expansion of the I57/Sauk Trail business district, and more restaurants. The Board and Village Leadership Team (VLT) will have the daunting task of addressing these aspirations while balancing the current realities of the financial forecast.

Bringing Financial Stability to the Village was the second most discussed strategic priority throughout the process. This priority was most articulated by the individual Board Members, the VLT, and the leaders within the community. Economic Development and Financial Stability go together. In fact, Financial Stability will drive almost all the desires, except volunteerism, of this Strategic Plan. The reality of the current financial status of the Village is a substantial issue and cannot be ignored. Currently, the Village is facing severe financial challenges. These challenges include but are not limited to depressed revenues, increased operational cost, and a decrease in state funding. Nevertheless, Economic Development must prevail! Striking the appropriate balance between fiscal accountability and growth will be the governance and leadership challenge for the next 5 years.

The Board of Trustees' excellence in governance and leadership will certainly be challenged during the execution of this new Strategic Plan.

Throughout the next five years the Board will regularly answer the John Carver governance question – *Who gets what benefits, at what cost?* Balancing the short- and long-term benefits for the stakeholders and residents of Richton Park will require unprecedented leadership and teamwork by the Board of Trustees and the Village Leadership Team.

Once the plan is approved, it will be presented to the entire community and launched during the 2020-21 fiscal year. Over the next several months, the Village Manager and Administrative Team will begin implementing the new Strategic Plan.

By 2025 the Village of Richton Park will have two major developments along its main thoroughfare – Sauk Trail. The Metra Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and the expansion of the I57/Sauk Trail business corridor will anchor and redefine the economic development trajectory of the Village of Richton Park. These two major economic development initiatives will establish the core of the new 2025 Strategic Plan. The other four strategic priorities will provide significant support to build the Richton Park economy just as it was when the Village was founded in 1926, ninety-four years ago.

Addendum

How can the Village of Richton Park encourage home ownership and increase the number of young family homeowners? According to researchers, young families who choose to move to a suburban community are looking for the following:

Affordability in homeownership, cost of living and transportation

Quality public schools – Out of the eleven schools in three school districts attended by students from Richton Park, nine (9) are designated as **Commendable**, one (1) is designated as **Underperforming**, and one (1) is designated as **Exemplary** by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Family/Kid-friendly activities – Based on this indicator, it will be important to stress quality parks and recreation programs and other activities for children. The Richton Park Public Library provides premier services for adults, teens, youth, and seniors including technology and digital access. The current facilities, completed in 2014, received the Dewberry Excellence in Design Award in 2016.

Entertainment/Cultural activities – Cultural activities are accessible to residents of Richton Park. Many are located in nearby south suburban communities and include the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra, Governors State University’s Center for Performing Arts, Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park, and Visual Arts Center, Freedom Hall, Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre, Country Club Theatre Pavilion, and Richton Park Fall Fest.

Amenities/Shopping/Healthcare such as restaurants, convenient shopping, grocery stores, drug stores/hospitals and medical professional—Needs improvement.

Outdoor recreation – The Parks and Recreation Department of Richton Park consists of 56.3 acres of park land, showcasing ten (10) parks district-wide that are ADA accessible. Facilities include baseball fields, basketball courts, soccer fields, bike and walking paths, volleyball, fishing, picnic areas, a Community Center, and programs for adults, teens, and youth. In addition, the Village is in close proximity to Forest Preserves of Cook County. There are 30 public, semi-private and private golf courses in or near the Village of Richton Park.