



January 2023

**2021–2026 STRATEGIC PLAN  
Progress Report**

# ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Village Board adopted its five-year Strategic Plan in 2021 as a tool to ensure the priorities set by the Village Board are conveyed in the organization's goals, that objectives are clearly developed to meet the goals, and that overall village government is accountable for meeting community needs. The Strategic Plan has five multi-year goals, with each goal containing its own set of objectives.

Progress reports are prepared biannually in January and August.

## MISSION

The Village of Sussex is committed to preserving the high quality of life enjoyed by our residents, providing fiscally sound, responsive municipal services and delivering those services in an effective, efficient and professional manner. The Village will:

- Sustain appealing, safe, high-quality residential neighborhoods and business districts.
- Maintain an appropriate balance between residential and business land uses.
- Preserve and develop open spaces and cultural and recreational facilities. Develop and promote a strong sense of community by preserving a unique small town heritage.
- Consult with and involve Sussex residents in the Village's decision making, promote two-way communication between the Village Board and residents, and encourage an atmosphere of openness and receptivity to all ideas and issues.
- Continually evaluate services and plan for the future of the Village. Cooperate and work collegially with neighboring communities and governments. Be responsive to individual concerns and needs while keeping in mind the good of the community as a whole.

## GOALS



**Economic Growth**      **Infrastructure & Facilities**      **Quality of Life**  
**Citizen Engagement**      **Financially Sound**

## BY THE NUMBERS

STRATEGIES UNDERWAY

12

## LEARN MORE

Read the full five-year strategic plan at <https://www.villagesussex.org/government/strategic-plan>



# PROGRESS REPORT

## Village Board Priorities

The Village Board identified five goals in the 2021–2026 Strategic Plan. Each goal includes a number of objectives and benchmarks to further clarify the Board priorities. Each goal is championed by a staff member of the Village's Management Team and employees have aligned their annual performance goals to the Village's Strategic Plan. Below is a detailed progress report on each of the goals and corresponding objectives.

 Completed

 In Progress

 Not Started/  
Delayed

## Economic Development



### Attract and retain commercial establishments (retail, restaurants, and entertainment) with a focus on filling vacant buildings and keeping Sussex dollars local.

- Develop and implement an updated plan for commercial attraction, which includes an analysis of building vacancies and a target vacancy rate for commercial space in the Village.
- Develop a robust partnership with the Center for Growth and The Chamber, which includes routine updates from these organizations to the elected officials.
- Develop a marketing campaign targeted at identifying prospective entrepreneurs and connect those prospective entrepreneurs with the information and tools needed to start a business in Sussex.
- Research incentive, grant, or support programs that are significant enough to address market barriers and encourage new businesses to open in our community.



### Attract and retain primary employers that will bring quality jobs to the community.

- Develop strategies to attract, recruit, and retain primary employers with a focus on next generation businesses. Offer incentives for developers who bring quality jobs to the Village.
- Support Waukesha County Center for Growth in their industry attraction efforts.

### Status Update

- In 2022 the Village filled about 19,458 square feet of vacant commercial spaces, which is 11.7% of vacant space from December 31, 2021. 55% of the remaining vacant space is the Shopko Building. Plans are underway to fill the Shopko Building with an indoor sports facility.
- The Village supported three new businesses with Main Street Bounce Back grants in the last quarter. The Village has revived the Economic Development Master Fund loan program that offers a low-interest rate loan targeted at business in the downtown area in partnership with Bank Five Nine.
- Village Staff has reengaged the Community Development Authority to explore downtown improvement projects that can help with placemaking and business attraction.

### Status Update

- On the Industrial front, the 100,000 square foot Adron building is complete. Wangard is under construction with a 150,000 square foot manufacturing building, and several other industrial users are looking at the Highlands Business Park.
- In partnership with the Waukesha County Center for Growth, the Village will participate in a Business Retention and Expansion program. While this is a county-wide program with other participating communities, the WCCG is assisting the Village in organizing and starting its own Business Retention and Expansion Program. The goal will be to visit community businesses on an ongoing basis to foster public/private partnerships and to increase awareness of various programs offered by the Village, County, and State.



## Maintain good roads in a fiscally responsible manner.

- Maintain the roads to a level that prevents premature road reconstruction, which includes annual road programs and routine maintenance.
- Continue increasing the annual funding to the Depreciation Fund for the Road Program, with the goal of reaching \$2 million allocated annually within five years.
- Research and evaluate alternate funding mechanisms and revenue sources to minimize borrowing.



## Ensure compliance with all utility regulations and adequate utility capacity to address future growth.

- Continue to monitor water and wastewater usage, capacity, and storage needs to determine when and where the Village needs to increase capacity.
- Update the Stormwater Management Plan, and incorporate the cost of the plan into the Depreciation Fund so the Village is adequately saving for these expenses.
- Monitor regulations for all utilities to understand future financial and operational impacts.

## Status Update

- The 2023 Budget increased the annual allocation of depreciation for roads to \$770,000 annually. These funds will be available for the 2023 road program and will reduce the total borrowing necessary for this project.
- Bids for the 2023 Road Program will be opened on January 26, 2023. Construction will take place from April through October. Staff will plan the 2023 Crackfilling project in the first half of the year.
- The next scheduled road program project is in 2025 in Braddock Place, Ridgeview, Coldwater and other areas north of Good Hope, east of Maple, south of Plainview and west of the railroad.
- Staff continues to monitor for grant opportunities, particularly through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). The Village applied for a CMAQ grant under the BIL for the Corky Curtis Trail Extension from Maple Avenue to Silver Spring Drive. This application was unsuccessful because the State Joint Finance Committee decided after the solicitation that only projects in road rights of way would be eligible for CMAQ funding. There are very few opportunities for Sussex to be competitive in the next round of BIL funding opportunities because we are not eligible for STP-Local or Local Bridge and the TAP program is targeting communities with populations under 5,000.

## Status Update

### Wastewater

- More Northeast Interceptor leaks were repaired in December when the two segments of mainline pipe along the east side of Waukesha Avenue near Linda Drive were repaired. This eliminated an estimated 10,000 gallons per day of clearwater infiltration. Numerous leaks in the sanitary system will also be repaired during the 2023 Road Program project. Our next target in searching for infiltration into our sanitary system will be the interceptor sewer between Silver Spring Drive and the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) which will be investigated in the winter of 2023/24.
- In 2022 the Village of Lannon contracted with the Village of Sussex to assist with the operation of parts of their sewer and water systems.
- The WWTP Repairs Project has been thoroughly discussed on the staff level and a list of top priority repairs/upgrades has been developed. About \$10,000 was budgeted in the Sewer Utility in 2023 for preliminary design and cost estimating to finalize the list. Design of the WWTP project is scheduled for 2024. The existing plant has a capacity of about 5 MGD, while the current average flow is about 2 to 2.5 MGD. Our most significant challenge with this existing facility is sludge storage. We continue to work on options to address this issue.

### Water

- Verizon is pursuing an option to install a new antenna array and associated building at the Executive Drive Water Tower. If the Board chooses to allow this installation, it will bring additional revenue to the Water Utility.
- The large meter replacement project is underway, as is the water model update.

# Infrastructure & Facilities (continued)



## Status Update - Continued

- The lead and copper rule compliance plan was postponed to 2023.
- The water supply evaluation study is nearing completion.
- One more water main loop is scheduled for 2023 construction along CTH VV from Hamilton School entrance to Miller Way. Future looping needs will likely be triggered by new developments.

## Storm Water

- DNR is working on a Total Maximum Daily Load study of the Illinois Fox, to which Sussex is tributary. Staff recommends postponing the update of the Storm Water Management Master Plan until we know what targets we'll need to hit based on the DNR's study.
- Staff continues to monitor for grant opportunities to offset costs for the study and for storm water infrastructure improvements.

# Quality of Life



## — Maintain high quality services.

- Identify a measureable level-of-service target for public-facing programs, track progress towards these goals, and report to the Board, including sufficient facilities and equipment.

## + Ensure Sussex is a family-friendly community.

- Update the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. As part of this process, identify potential amenities and programs for underserved populations (i.e. teen programs).
- Continue implementing the Village Park Master Plan to add new amenities and update existing ones. Meet with key stakeholders in park usage (ie. baseball clubs, Lions/SAS Club) to collaborate on functionality of park design.
- Explore the feasibility of adding more live music to Sussex's existing special events (i.e. Pints in the Park) or by adding new events and consider facility needs.
- Analyze recreation program offerings to identify service gaps.

## + Explore opportunities to construct a community pool/aquatics center.

- Research pools in similar size communities to estimate capital and operating costs, identify potential funding mechanisms, and learn best practices.
- Explore public and private partnerships for funding and usage to keep some of the cost burden off tax payers.
- Complete a feasibility study (hire a consultant) to identify community needs and refine cost estimates. As part of this study, determine if the Village should construct a smaller community pool at a lower cost to taxpayers or a larger aquatic center with more amenities.

## Status Update

The goal is to quantify the services provided, how they impact the community, and increase the quality of life afforded to the citizens of Sussex. Due to staff turnover and competing priorities this objective has been pushed back to 2023 or 2024.

## Status Update

- The Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan was approved for the 2023 budget. Work will begin early 2023 with a goal for plan adoption in late 2023 and implementation in 2024.
- The Village Park Master Plan progress was delayed this fall, but will be addressed in 2023 depending on progress with the development west of Village Park.
- Music will continue to be a part of Sussex's special events if sponsorship funds are secured. We will continue to address identified service gaps in our programming.

## Status Update

- The full feasibility study will be funded for 2024. However, the 2023 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan process will incorporate research findings and provide preliminary recommendations about a possible community pool.



## + Reduce debt levels.

- Continue to invest in the pay-as-you-go, depreciation fund for capital items, with the goal of fully depreciating all capital expenditures and the annual road program.
- Analyze existing debt and opportunities to restructure/re-finance to reduce debt.
- Evaluate future Capital Improvement Plan projects for debt management opportunities.

## + Reduce the average cost burden for residents with the goal of being below the median cost when compared to peer communities.

- Identify this target cost and report on it annually as part of the budget.
- Explore possible cost saving measures by partnering with surrounding communities and organizations or by identifying opportunities to reduce costs within our operations.

## + Prepare for the end of growth.

- Study staffing needs at the end of growth. Continue the existing practice of budgeting and stepping in these additional employees.
- Study communities that are already done growing and learn from their story.

## + Attract and retain quality employees.

- Complete a salary study every three years. The Village's goal is to pay employees at 75% of the median pay rate.
- Budget for staff raises annually based on the market and continue with performance-based raises to reward high performing employees.
- Routinely complete anonymous employee engagement surveys.

## Status Update

- During the completion of the 2023 budget, annual depreciation was adjusted/increased to account for new capital items being purchased. The budget was also adjusted to begin depreciating the library building and depreciation funds for the Civic Center were reallocated from going toward debt service to be available for depreciation.
- The only building not being fully depreciated is the Civic Center. Two more steps of \$39,000 per year will take care of this. Cycle gaps remain for the Public Safety Building, parks buildings and facilities, Civic Center and the Pauline Haass Public Library.
- In November 2022 the Village paid off \$1.6 million in sewer debt that was callable. The payment of this debt came from existing funds on hand in the Sewer Utility, mainly RCA funds, as well as unrestricted funds.

## Status Update

- The target median cost was identified and reported on as part of the 2023 budget. The Village continues to be ranked in the middle of our peer communities for total costs.
- In 2022, the Village entered into a new contract for garbage collection. While the cost to residents was an increase over the prior year, we were able to limit the increase by changing the collection company.

## Status Update

- We continue to phase in the hiring of employees as we have done in the past. The Village has met with all the peer communities as part of the staffing analysis and is working to analyze the information. The goal of this study is to benchmark existing staffing levels in comparison to our peer communities and project future staffing needs resulting from growth.

## Status Update

- The Village completed the 2022 compensation study, which benchmarks our compensation with peer communities. These compensation studies are completed every three years. There were notable changes in several non-managerial level positions. The 2023 adopted budget included \$70,000 in market adjustments to address the identified gaps. All but \$1,500 of the \$70,000 proposed for market adjustments is directed to frontline, non-supervisory positions, which is where the greatest market discrepancies were found. Nearly 70% of the funds will go to address pay challenges in Public Works and Parks frontline employee pay. Administrative Assistants receive 15% of the funds and the remaining is a combination of positions.
- The Village continues to budget for raises each year based on the market and continues to utilize a performance-based system for raises. For 2023, employee merit raises ranged from 2.75% to 5%.
- The 2023 adopted budget includes funding for an employee engagement survey tool. Staff will work to implement this tool in 2023 along with creating an employee committee to analyze the results.

# Citizen Engagement



## + Better understand topics and issues that are important to the public.

- Research and identify new opportunities to engage with the public.
- Identify and routinely report on metrics that measure public engagement.
- Research and present options for a community wide survey to be conducted routinely to evaluate service levels and identify issues of importance to the public.

## + Solicit feedback on specific projects, topics, and services of interest to the public.

- Continue to seek public input for all major projects (i.e. major road reconstructions, park projects, library project, etc.).

## Status Update

- The Village continued with the routine pulse surveys, which started in October 2021. The surveys were posted on social media platforms, the website, and available at the front counter in the Civic Center. The results were distributed to the Village Board. In 2023 surveys will be posted by request of staff or the Village Board.
- The Village has identified key employees at all levels of the organization to help enhance our social media presence. These employees have assisted with creating social media stories on Facebook and Instagram. Examples are snow plowing updates and pictures of recreation programs. The result of these efforts is more diverse and timely information to residents. We also posted two videos in 2022—Prides Park build and Egg Drop—with plans to post more videos and reels in 2023.
- The first set of engagement metrics have been incorporated into this Strategic Plan Report, with plans to continue adding metrics in the coming year.

## Status Update

- In late 2021 and early 2022, the Pauline Haass Library facilitated a planning process to assess the space needs of the library, examine the current facility, and engage the public on the services and spaces they want to see at their library. This process engaged over 100 community leaders and residents and will result in a recommendation to the Village Board.
- The Village also held community meetings and solicited one-on-one feedback from impacted residents for the 2022 park renewal at Prides Crossing Park, the Road Program planned for 2023, and the pickleball courts at Melinda Weaver Park.
- In 2023 feedback will be solicited for the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

### 2022 Social Media Reach

Reach		
Facebook	125,433	<i>Page Reach: The number of people who saw any content from your Page or about your Page, including posts, stories, ads, social information from people who interact with your Page and more.</i>
Instagram	3,702	<i>Page Reach: The number of unique accounts that saw any of your posts or stories at least once.</i>
Impressions		
NextDoor	19,761	<i>Post Impressions: Unique views of posts and unique opens and clicks of any email notifications.</i>
Twitter	12,040	<i>Tweet Impressions: Number of times users saw your Tweets.</i>

### 2022 Social Media Followers/Subscribers

Platform	Followers/Subscribers	Change From 2021
Facebook	6,575	↑ 860
NextDoor	2,994	↑ 312
Instagram	933	↑ 159
Twitter	392	↑ 18

### 2022 Recorded Meeting Views

Quarter	Views
Q1	67
Q2	33
Q3	28
Q4	34

