

August 2024

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 OR COMPLETED **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

- The owners of the former Shopko building have received their building permits to begin transforming the vacant commercial building into a new sports training facility.
- The Village had over 15 Plans of Operation for new businesses go through the Plan Commission in 2023 and five so far in 2024. Many of these businesses are moving into the vacant spaces in the multitenant commercial buildings along Main Street.
- The Economic Development Master Fund grant program is now available to small businesses in the center business district along Main Street and the Community Development Authority has approved a grant for Cabana Cortez for the interior remodel of their business to attract users of the Bugline Trail.
- The Village continues to work with the Community Development Authority and is staying current on available grants from the State to help promote redevelopment in the downtown, as well as other ways to promote activity in the downtown, including becoming a Connect Community with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation.

Status Update

- The Village has approved a new 135,000-square-foot speculative industrial building in the Highlands Business Park with an anticipated user to occupy about 50,000 square feet of it. The Village also approved a second 135,000-square-foot industrial building in the Highlands Business Park that will be the headquarters to Dynamic Ratings, an existing Sussex business who is developing the building for themselves with room to expand.
- Village staff has continued to meet with the Waukesha County Center for Growth (WCCG) and has accompanied the WCCG on multiple business visits to discuss ongoing staffing, economic, and other hardships that the businesses are facing in today's climate to determine how the Village and WCCG can provide assistance
- The Village will continue its own business retention and expansion program to ensure that businesses are aware of the Village's willingness to be a resource. Staff continues to work closely with the WCCG when prospective industrial or commercial users are looking for sites in Waukesha County to provide information to the WCCG for suitable land that would meet the requirements of the specific users.



+ 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 2025 Road Program design is well underway, and we are on target to bid in January. Pavement and curb have been inspected and the markings collected, the storm and sanitary pipes have been televised, storm and sanitary structures have been inspected, and valves and hydrants have been tested. The project includes Braddock Place, Ridgeview, Coldwater and other areas north of Good Hope, east of Maple, south of Plainview and west of the railroad. It also includes repairs to Richmond Road west of STH 164 and work in Village Park, including sanitary, water and storm extensions, storm pond construction, reconstruction of Weaver Drive, and extension of Wildflower Parkway to the west property line. The designer will also prepare plans and specifications for maintenance of the parking lots at the Public Works Garage, the Water Pollution Control facility, the Public Safety Building, and Armory Park. The inspections for the parking lots are also complete.

Status Update

Wastewater

- Addressing inflow and infiltration (I&I) into the sanitary sewer system is an ongoing effort. It is expensive to treat clean groundwater at that plant that has infiltrated into the system. Several significant leaks were found during video inspection for the 2025 Road Program. Some of these have already been repaired and we are under contract to grout leaks in about 13 manholes. There are also 4–5 sanitary laterals that are leaking badly in the Coldwater Creek area (one at about 25 gallons per minute, or 36,000 gallons per day) that will need to be repaired by homeowners at their expense.
- The other area where infiltration has been found to be significant is on the Lannon Interceptor. We've had several conversations with Lannon about this issue and they are working to pinpoint the areas needing repair and considering repair options. For the first 6 months of the year, we've determined that 34.5 million gallons of groundwater has infiltrated into the portion of the Lannon Interceptor along Silver Spring Drive from Townline to the Lynnwood Lift Station (averaging nearly 189,000 gallons per day). We began invoicing our partner communities for their share of this infiltration in January, and thus far have charged them almost \$64,000.
- The existing plant has an annual average capacity of about 5.1 million gallons per day (MGD), while the current annual average flow is about 2.83 MGD. With significant precipitation this year, our average is trending significantly higher than in previous years. The low monthly average was 2.0 MGD in July 2023, and the high monthly average was 4.6 MGD in April 2024. The plant does not need a capacity upgrade at this time, as it can handle and treat a daily maximum flow of up to 12.75 MGD and a monthly maximum flow of 7.08 MGD.
- A consultant has been hired to complete the plans and specifications for the 2025 WWTP Repairs Project and the design is progressing well. We plan to hold a Technical Advisory Committee meeting with our partner communities in the coming months to discuss design findings



and the cost share agreement. We are on track to bid this project in January and construction is scheduled for 2025.

- Current challenges at the plant include chloride levels above our allowable limit, adjustments to chemical treatments to keep our phosphorus levels within limits as the influent strengths and compositions change, and sludge storage. We continue to work on options to address these issues, including process changes that will be possible after replacement of the aerator motors with variable frequency drives.
- Our DNR Wastewater Permit expires in October 2024. Staff has completed our application for the new permit and has completed our chloride variance request. DNR will be adding PFAS testing to the requirements this permit cycle.
- The pilot Water Softener Rebate Program started on January 1, 2024. We've approved optimization rebates for seven residences and new softener rebates for nine residences so far, for a total incentive payment cost of \$2,325.

Water

- The Salem standpipe is scheduled to be repainted in 2024.
- Our water tower maintenance contract expires in 2024, so a Request for Proposals will be prepared in the second half of the year.
- Verizon has started installation on their new antenna array and associated building at the Executive Drive water tower. This will bring additional revenue to the Water Utility.
- The large meter replacement project continues. 2024 is year three of this 4-year project.
- The lead and copper rule compliance plan is well underway.
- The water supply evaluation study showed that additional water supply of about 300-350 GPM is going to be needed in the next couple of years. Lannon also needs additional water supply of about 350 GPM for redundancy/emergency interconnection. Therefore, staff is working with Lannon on the possibility of sharing the cost of constructing a new well.

Stormwater

- Sussex stormwater drains to the Illinois Fox. DNR expects to complete the Total Maximum Daily Load study of the Illinois Fox in 2026. The DNR has issued a draft MS-4 Stormwater Discharge permit for the Illinois Fox communities (permit is updated about every 5 years) and has decided NOT to include any Illinois Fox TMDL requirements in that updated permit. However, in the next 5-year cycle (about 2029), DNR will require significant planning efforts for Illinois Fox communities. This is when the Stormwater Management Master Plan should be updated. The Village continues to monitor for grant opportunities to offset costs for the study and for stormwater infrastructure improvements. We may want to start the update about a year before the new MS-4 permit is issued as starting before we are required to start could improve our chances of getting a grant.



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

- In the 2024 budget, annual depreciation was adjusted/increased to account for new capital items being purchased. All buildings and equipment are being fully depreciated.
- Our roads are the only remaining infrastructure items that have a depreciation gap. We will continue to recommend that the Village Board increase the annual depreciation for roads according to our project plan during each budget cycle. The 2024 budget increased the annual allocation of depreciation for roads by \$100,000 for a total of \$870,000 annual depreciation. These funds will be available for the 2025 road program and will reduce the total borrowing necessary for this project.
- In March 2023 the Village paid off \$530,000 in community development bonds that were callable. The payment of this debt came from existing funds on hand from TIF 6.

Status Update

- The target median cost was identified and reported on as part of the 2024 budget. The Village continues to be ranked in the middle of our peer communities for total costs.
- The Village continues our partnership with the Village of Lannon to maintain their water system. We are also exploring a partnership to drill a new well that would serve both Lannon and Sussex.

Status Update

- We continue to phase in the hiring of employees as we have done in the past. The 2024 budget included a new three-year phase in for a future public works employee.

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 were directed to frontline, non-supervisory positions, which is where the greatest market discrepancies were found. Nearly 70% of the funds went to address pay challenges in Public Works and Parks frontline employee pay. Administrative Assistants received 15% of the funds and the remaining was a combination of positions.
- In 2024 the Village implemented a new pay progression program to help move employees to the midpoint of their pay range more quickly. As part of this program, employees receive an additional 2.5% raise after their merit raise on January 1st if the employee is below the midpoint of their pay range on that date. As a three-year catch-up effort, employees who are in the same position automatically move to the midpoint of their pay range on January 1st following their 6-year anniversary.

Financially Sound (continued)



- The Village continues to budget for raises each year based on the market and continues to utilize a performance-based system for raises. For 2024, employee raises ranged from 3% to 5%.
- The Village has implemented an employee engagement survey tool. The Village continues to score at or above benchmark organizations in all but one area. An Employee Vibe Committee has also formed to review the survey results and develop programs based on the employee feedback. This committee led the Employee Appreciation Picnic. They also discussed employee benefits and recommended changes to the Village Board.

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. Staff plans to start this in 2025.

Status Update

- The Park and Open Space Plan (Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan) was completed and adopted by the Village Board in May 2024. Staff utilized the plan when planning for the 2025 budget and will use it to inform decisions.
- Design for the Village Park Master Plan Phase B is underway. The Village President appointed a task force of community group leaders (Lions Club and Sussex Area Service Club) and community members to analyze and inform the design and functionality of the new Main Pavilion. The task force proposal will be presented to the Village Board later this year.
- Live music sponsorships were filled for all 2024 Pints in the Parks events. Additionally, four musical groups are a part of the 100-year weekend celebration.
- We continue to address identified service gaps in our programming. An example includes adding the Leaders in Training Program for teens as part of our Day Camp program and featured a Taylor Swift cover band as part of the 100 year celebration. Staff plans to streamline the department's mission and vision to guide the addition and subtraction of existing programs based on registration data.

Status Update

- In July, staff had their first meeting with Councilman-Hunsaker. The Parks and Village Board will form a committee (task force) structure and review the process at their August meeting. Public engagement is likely to begin in mid-to-late September.

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

- From October 2021 through December 2022 the Village completed an initial pulse survey process to collect general feedback from the public. 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 and 2024 surveys were posted by request of staff or the Village Board.
- The Village continues to adapt our social media presence. In 2023 we kicked off a “Did you know” segment that features services that may not be well known throughout the community. Examples included vacation checks conducted by our Police Department and free medical and sharps disposal options. We have continued these posts along with the very popular “What’s your question Wednesday” in 2024. We have also celebrated the Village’s 100-year anniversary by posting photos on social media—both old and new—throughout the year.
- In 2023 the engagement metrics were incorporated into the Strategic Plan Report, with plans to continue adding metrics in the coming years.

Status Update

- In 2023, The Park and Open Space Plan (Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan) utilized two in-person public input opportunities and a survey that was accessible for 30 days. The survey collected 490 responses from the community. The public input shaped the updated Park and Open Space Plan in 2024.

2024 Social Media Followers/Subscribers		
Platform	Followers/Subscribers	Change YTD
Facebook	7,901	↑ 573
NextDoor	3,000	↑ 252
Instagram	1,019	↑ 62
Twitter/X	425	↑ 27

2024 Top Social Media Posts YTD		
Platform	Post	Reach/Reactions
Facebook	7/30 Did you know/Safe Exchange Zone	45,876/474
Instagram	4/23 Grogan Park Removal Day	1,800/56

Social Media Reach		
Reach	2023	2024 YTD
<i>The number of people/unique accounts who saw any content from or about your Page, including posts, stories, ads.</i>		
Facebook	205,033	228,500
Instagram	4,173	4,600
Impressions	2023	2024 YTD
NextDoor <i>Unique views of posts and unique opens and clicks of any email notifications.</i>	6,702 (17 posts)	3,294 (10 posts)

Email Updates (eBlasts)		
Subscribers	Total Emails Sent	Open Rate
1,561	87,487	60%

2024 Recorded Meetings YTD			
Quarter	Views	Unique Viewers	Video w/Most Views
Q1	19	8	Plan Commission 2/20 (4 views)
Q2	55	21	Village Board 5/28 & Plan Commission 4/16 (10 views each)
Q3			
Q4			