

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

The 2020-2030 Strategic Plan Update of the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission is based on an open process of collaborative thinking, decision-making and input from staff, commissioners, stakeholders and the general public.

The initial planning process, which began in September of 2018, and concluded in June of 2019, involved over 1,600 participants who provided input through focus groups, surveys, stakeholder interviews, and citizen task force input and review.

In late 2024, as the agency approached the plan’s mid-point, there was a desire for a mid-plan update to focus on progress towards the agency’s existing goals, identify new facility and program priorities, and update the plan based on new realities.

To update the plan, the Commission followed a similar public outreach process, involving more than 1,100 participants who provided input through focus groups, surveys, stakeholder interviews, and citizen task force input and review.

The updated Plan’s purpose is to identify community parks and recreation goals and outline specific objectives aimed towards accomplishing these goals.

The updated Plan confirms many of the goals outlined in the 2020-2030 strategic plan as well as incorporating additional findings based on community input.

Specifically identified are program and facility priorities that will accommodate projected changes in the growth, demographics, and economic conditions during the next five years.

The updated plan is designed to provide a conceptual framework for the Commission’s operations and capital improvement for the next five (5) years.

Approval of the plan does not commit the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission or future Commissions financially.

The Commission acknowledges and expresses appreciation for the commitment of staff, focus group and task force members, community members, and stakeholders who have contributed to this plan. We have confidence that the collective voice of the community is reflected in this document and are committed to the goals that have been established through this process.

** These statements reflect the additional findings for the Strategic Plan Update based on 2025 community input.*

VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

The vision, mission, and values defined below provide the framework for the Plan and should remain dynamic over time so as to ensure that they continue to reflect the needs of the community.

OUR VISION

Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission – Creating Community through People, Parks, and Programs

OUR MISSION

The Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission exists to enhance the quality of life for all citizens of the district through the development of recreation programs and facilities that promote a lifestyle of wellness, physical activities and cultural experiences for all ages.

OUR CORE VALUES

Those who live within the Irmo Chapin Recreation District community cherish a high quality of life supported by the following core community values.

- Development and celebration of arts and cultural opportunities.
- Provides opportunities for healthy, active lifestyles that contribute to residents’ quality of life.
- Preserves, protects, and manages critical natural resources.
- Create community connections and opportunities for socialization.*
- Offers a wide diversity of programs and facilities.*
- Values collaboration and partnerships with other agencies, businesses, schools, and private contractors.*
- Employs an outstanding and dedicated group of staff members and volunteers.*
- Generates value for what residents pay and is a selling point for the community.*
- Creates economic impact for the district and region through sport tourism, out-of-town visitation, local spending, and small business incubation.*
- Is a trusted agency in its fiduciary responsibilities, safety of programs and facilities.

GOAL 1: PROGRAMS

ICRC will continually strive to deliver dynamic, inclusive, and safe recreation programs that enhance and contribute to a healthy, creative, and diverse community.

- Offer recreation and social support programs that encourage creativity and lifelong learning.
- Provide programs that promote physical, mental, and emotional health and well-being.
- Focus on creating an inclusive environment that prioritizes social interactions among our diverse community.

- Look for novel programmatic opportunities that take advantage of our unique natural resources.
- Continue to provide opportunities that focus on youth development, family programming, and supporting our seniors.
- Expand opportunities for adaptive recreation programming for individuals with disabilities.*
- Increase opportunities for outdoor recreation and nature-based/environmental programming and special events.*
- Develop additional arts and cultural programming.*
- Continue to provide both large- and small-scale special events that connect the community.*
- Expand adult programs, including group fitness classes, social programs, senior travel opportunities, and sports instruction.*
- Maintain opportunities for youth recreation programming.*

STRATEGIC PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

Outdoor Adventure and Environmental Education Programs
The Commission will broaden its offering of programs, activities, and educational opportunities that focus on developing skills, building confidence, encouraging social interactions, and fostering an understanding and appreciation of our natural environment and the impact we have on it. We will expand opportunities for outdoor recreation and nature-based/environmental programming and special events, with a emphasis on Saluda Shoals Park.

Fitness and Wellness Activities
The Commission will seek to maintain and develop fitness and wellness programs that encourage physical, mental, social, and emotional health.

Special Events
The Commission will continue to offer and expand special events that promote family engagement and community building. We will explore opportunities to create new large, medium, and small events that celebrate the diversity, culture, traditions, and history of our community. Additionally, large-scale events will provide opportunities to generate revenue through added services and hospitality.

Team Sports and Youth Programs
The Commission will offer team sports to encourage health and wellness for individuals of all ages. We will focus on balancing competitive, instructional, and recreational options to support youth participation, engagement, and development. We will continue to offer youth recreation programs, and explore the expansion of summer programming in specialty sports camps and recreation camps.

Active Adults
The Commission will continue to offer recreational, educational, and cultural programs for the active adult population and work to expand our adult programming offerings.

Aquatics
The Commission will seek to develop collaborative relationships with organizations that will support our objective to provide for water recreation and the health benefits of aquatic exercise across the lifespan.

Arts and Cultural Programs
The Commission will continue to offer and expand on programs that foster appreciation, inspire creativity, and provide arts and cultural education experiences for all ages.

Senior Programs
The Commission will offer recreation and social support programs for seniors that encourage lifelong learning and enable them to live happy, productive, independent lives.

Therapeutic/Adaptive Recreation
The Commission will seek to expand access to adaptive recreation programs for individuals with disabilities.*

GOAL 2: FACILITIES

ICRC will be proactive in obtaining, allocating, developing, maintaining, and protecting facility and land resources to accommodate the needs of a diverse and growing population.

- Identify partners to help with green space/infrastructure protection and expansion
- Anticipate growth and allocate space for incoming demand of services.
- Continue to improve existing parks and aging facilities and infrastructure to ensure they remain vibrant and effective to meet the needs of the community.
- Promote walkable and bikeable infrastructure and healthy, active lifestyles by continuing to acquire and develop land for new trails and greenways.
- Add a regional park – explore opportunities on Lake Murray to provide lake access.*
- Add indoor recreation space.*
- Expand outdoor recreation opportunities at Mungo Park.*
- Create a business plan to add at least one new revenue producing/enterprise facility that serves the public and increases cost recovery.*

STRATEGIC FACILITY OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

The Saluda Shoals Riverwalk and District Wide Trails
The Commission will work to advance this regionally significant project through collaboration with community partners and the business community. Additionally, the

Commission will develop a district-wide trails plan in partnership with municipalities, citizen groups, and transportation planners, aiming to connect neighborhoods, parks, schools, downtown areas, and other key destinations.

Efforts will also focus on acquiring and developing land to expand trails and connectivity. Expanding the trail network will also enhance the district’s service level by increasing the total miles of trail available.

Passive and Open Space

The Commission will explore opportunities to acquire, maintain, and protect land as passive parks and open spaces, providing the community with spaces to meet their recreational and leisure needs.

Indoor/Outdoor Recreation Facilities in the Chapin Area

The Commission will seek to expand or build indoor recreation space in the Chapin area to accommodate increased demand for indoor activities including additional athletic gym/court space, multipurpose studios, basic weight/ cardio rooms, and indoor walking/jogging trails.

New Facility Opportunities

The Commission will monitor population growth in the area and explore the possibility of adding additional facilities, considering community needs and availability of funding. Facility options identified in the plan include:

- **A Regional Park** – To increase passive green space, potentially offer lake access, and opportunities for additional walking and hiking trails.*
- **A Revenue Producing Enterprise Facility** - A facility that generates revenue, supports public use, and contributes to the agency’s financial sustainability.*

Take Care of Existing Parks

The Commission will continue to enhance existing parks to meet the desired level of service standards.

GOAL 3: FINANCE

ICRC will be good stewards of all resources in providing for public parks and recreation in the community as applied in the vision, mission, and goals of this plan.

- Operate within a balanced budget annually.
- Maintain a sufficient balance of revenue sources for operations through tax dollars, user fees and grants to ensure stability.
- Maintain sufficient fund balance resources to support agency operations throughout the budget year.
- Minimize property tax impact of future facility development and expansion.
- Develop a reserve fund policy that ties the fund balance to months of operation.*
- Review current fee structures to ensure equitable access to facilities and programs particularly for

- seniors, low-income families, and district residents.*
- Balance capital investments between renovating and maintaining existing park and recreation facilities and acquiring land/developing new facilities and properties.*
- Continue to explore opportunities for partnerships to enhance program and facility offerings for district residents.*
- Highlight and emphasize the value that ICRC provides to residents, including the economic impact that ICRC programs and facilities generate in the local area.*
- Plan new capital investments based on bond capacity.*

STRATEGIC FINANCIAL OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

Set Level of Service and Quality Expectation

The Commission will ensure that financial and human resource allocations are in line with established standards of quality while maintaining efficiency in delivering on the community’s expectations.

Market-based Business Approach

The Commission will continue to pursue a market-based business model that balances user fees and tax dollars to support the capital and operational costs of the agency. This priority will guide future development as it relates to operational sustainability.

Incremental Capital Investment

The Commission will seek to fund capital investment through incremental budgetary spending where feasible. Grant funding will be aggressively pursued so as to expand available resources.

Funding Identified Needs for Major Facility Development

The Commission will seek a variety of funding sources for facility development to meet the needs of the growing population while remaining within the district’s 8% bonding capacity.

Saluda Shoals Foundation

The Commission will seek to support and collaborate with the Saluda Shoals Foundation on agreed upon common initiatives to add amenities and programs at Saluda Shoals Park and throughout the district.

Partnerships

The Commission will actively seek to strengthen and build community partnerships that support the vision, mission and values of the recreation district to accomplish its goals.

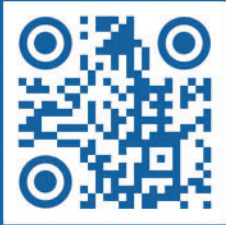
Learn More

For more information on the parks and programs of the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission, please visit icrc.net.



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