



Recreation for Life

Strategic Considerations for Recreation and Parks: In Support of the Alberta Vision

***"A vibrant and prosperous province
where Albertans enjoy a superior quality of life and are confident about the future
for themselves and their children."***

- Alberta Government Business Plan, 2000-2003

Prepared for
ARPA
November, 2001

Whereas recreation includes all of those activities in which an individual chooses to participate in [one's] leisure time and is not confined solely to sports and physical recreation programs but includes artistic, creative, cultural, social and intellectual activities;

And whereas recreation is a fundamental human need for citizens of all ages and interests and for both sexes and is essential to the psychological, social and physical well-being of man; ...

Be it therefore resolved that this Conference recognizes the fact that recreation is a social service in the same way that health and education are considered as social services and that recreation's purpose should be

- a) to assist individual and community development;
- b) to improve the quality of life; and
- c) to enhance social functioning.

Such recognition will indicate the constitutional responsibility of the Provinces and Territories in recreation services**

(*recognizing that this does not mean exclusivity and that the resources and cooperation of all jurisdictions, as well as a wide variety of private and community agencies, are required to meet the recreation needs of all citizens.)

Resolution adopted by Federal/Provincial Recreation Ministers
Edmonton, Alberta, 1974

This document was prepared for Alberta Recreation and Parks Association by Matthias Inc.: Designing the Future.

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1. Introduction

This report provides considerations for choosing strategic directions that will influence actions of the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association, which advocates for recreation and parks¹ in Alberta.

“A vibrant and prosperous province where Albertans enjoy a superior quality of life and are confident about the future for themselves and their children.

- Alberta Government
Business Plan

The strategic considerations offered in this report build on the history and evolution of the recreation and parks sector, and focus primarily on potential strategic directions related to human and social / community development. Both external and internal directions are considered, since any options for strategic directions will require the sector to build internal capacity.

The strategic considerations also recognize that any direction for the recreation and parks sector must facilitate collaboration with other sectors to achieve a common desired future. The Alberta Government Business Plan provides a challenging future to act as that focus. The recreation and parks sector appears to be uniquely positioned to make highly effective contributions for achieving the superior quality of life for all Albertans demanded by that desired future.

Sections two and three of the document describe the evolution of the recreation and parks sector, and a desired future. Sections four and five describe the challenges of achieving the desired future and implications for the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association.

2. Building on Strong Foundations

Recreation and parks has a rich history in Alberta and has been an integral part of building better communities and a successful province.

Evolution of Recreation and Parks Sector

Future directions build on a foundation that has been established over time. The Recreation and Parks Sector has a rich history, and its evolution over the last 50 years is described in the chart on the next page.

¹ *Recreation* includes all of those activities in which an individual chooses to participate in one's leisure time, is not confined solely to sports and physical recreation programs and includes artistic, creative, cultural, social and intellectual activities. *Parks* refers to municipal and provincial parks.

Evolution of the Recreation and Parks Sector



1950's and earlier Individualized activities – local or no organization.
Contribution to crime prevention recognized.



1960's/1970's Broader perspective. Community Development Process. Community Library network expanded. Arts and Culture identified as part of the sector. 1974 National Recreation Statement. 1974 Lalonde Report described the Determinants of Health as being broader than health services and highlighted importance of active lifestyle. ParticipAction.



1970's/1980's Focus largely on facilities development. Reduced emphasis on human development and community development. Emphasis on specific parts of the sector, such as sports plan. The focus on specialization further fragmented the sector.



1980's/1990's Focus on outcomes – the Benefits Statements. WHO definition of health identified need to shift focus from 'not sick' to 'complete state of physical, mental, and social wellbeing'. Public sector focused on deficit reduction and cost cutting. Focus on fitness and individual lifestyle continued. Sector fragmented and becoming marginalized. Calls to reposition, focused on recreation and parks' potential for reducing social problems. Promotion of recreation and parks as an essential service.



000's++ Focus on building human and community capacity, social cohesion, growth and development, superior quality of life. Recognition of recreation and parks sector contribution and leadership potential.



The strengths of the foundation on which the recreation and parks sector builds its future are found deeper in its history than the immediate past. In many ways it seems as though recreation and parks was slightly ahead of its time, in understanding health status, the need for facilitating change through coaching and mentoring, as well as the understanding of how to build community capacity, focusing on positive outcomes and using evidence of what works to make decisions.

Recreation and parks has things to learn too, but effectively could not move forward as a sector until a critical mass of understandings of those evolutionary concepts took deeper root across the whole human and social/community sector as well as the economic development and physical environment sectors.

The evolution of the recreation and parks sector demonstrates a long history of continuous change, to meet the particular challenges of the time. Since the 1980's though, there has been an increasing marginalization of recreation and parks as the focus of attention has moved to deficit reduction, education, and acute health care. The strength of the foundation on which the recreation and parks sector builds is found deeper in its history.

In many ways, it seems as though recreation and parks was slightly ahead of its time in understanding a number of evolutionary concepts. One is that health status is determined by other things than health services. Certainly, the recreation and parks sector had a fairly narrow focus - primarily on the physical elements of lifestyle, fitness and active living and on community development. However, it still understood the determinants of positive outcomes such as health / wellness, appropriate social behavior and healthy child and youth development earlier than the service delivery sectors whose history is more firmly grounded in reactive strategies that focus on illness and social problems.

Recreation and parks practitioners' skills were focused on coaching – facilitating healthy development of skills in sports, music and other arts for individuals and in facilitating change and community development on the larger scales, contrasted to the 'expert' role that was the focus in other sectors. Though the language was different, the recognition of the importance of community capacity was inherent in recreation and parks community development initiatives.

The development of "recreation and parks: benefits statements"² permitted recreation and parks to focus on outcomes, especially positive outcomes, and on evidence base for decisions on what strategies to use, before those became recognized broadly in other sectors. Recreation and parks has things to learn too, but effectively, the recreation and parks sector could not move forward until a critical mass of understandings of those evolutionary concepts took deeper root across the human and social / community sector, as well.

Now however, some of those developments are becoming better established in other sectors, and across the economic development and physical environment sectors. The successful elimination of the deficit is in sight, and the question now is where to invest effort and resources wisely to continue and enhance the quality of life of all Albertans.

Although the specific terminology differs, the Government of Alberta Ministries' Business Plans show the various sectors have

² The Benefits Catalogue: Canadian Parks and Recreation Association; 1997

commonalities in their evolution. The human services sectors' plans identify that, in addition to treating illness, responding appropriately to protect children and vulnerable adults, and providing justice and corrections services, they must intervene earlier, and work to prevent problems. Wellness is important. But they also identify the need to go even further, and focus on development –'growing' healthy caring responsible people – and child development is a critical component of this strategy.

The Business Plans and "intergovernmental initiatives" describe the need to work together to achieve common outcomes. There is growing recognition that individual and community capacity is interrelated with both economic development and environmental sustainability.

Evidence of the benefits of recreation and parks' activities, parallel the understanding that 'determinants' of health, appropriate social behavior and lifelong learning create healthy, caring, responsible and knowledgeable people and healthy, crime and violence free communities.

Interest in promoting community capacity spans a number of sectors. The Ministries of Community Development, Children's Services, Health and Wellness, Justice, Learning, Aboriginal Affairs and Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, all identify its importance. It is increasingly recognized that community capacity and social cohesion is critical to sustainable health and economic development.

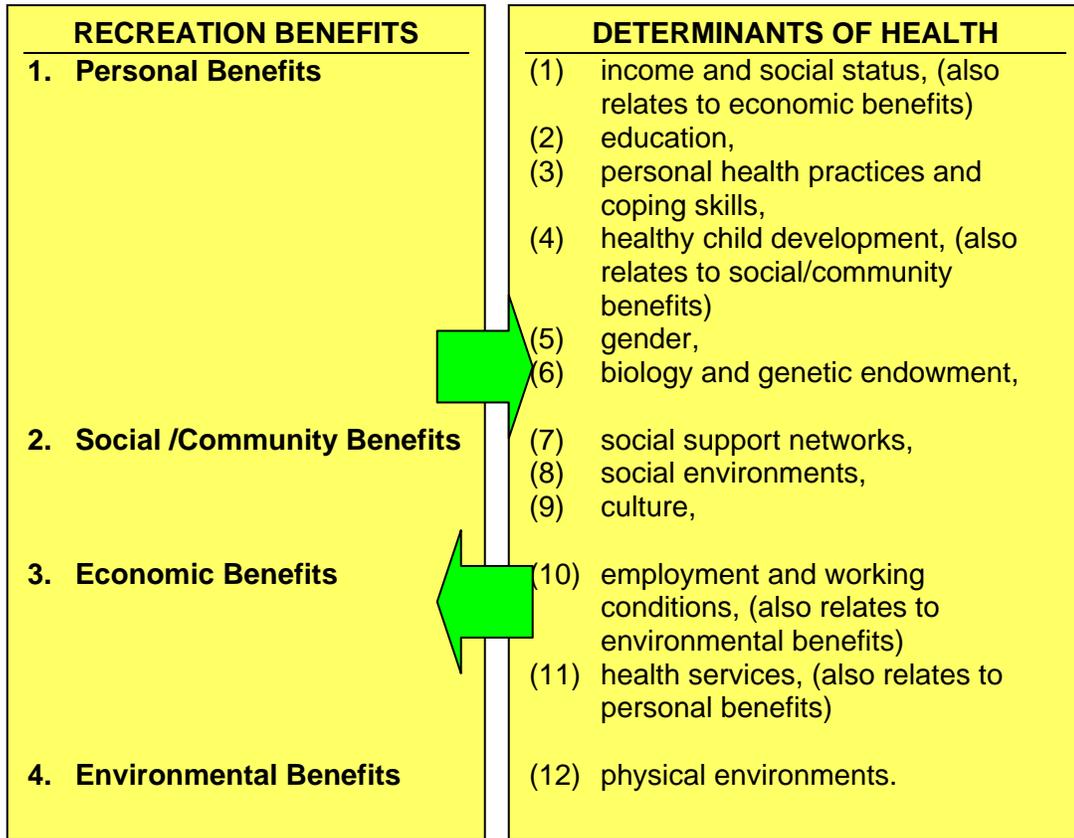
Evidence based decision making, such as that used to develop the "recreation and parks: benefits statements" is identified as an important approach for the future.³

Many sectors refer, directly or indirectly, to the importance of the 'determinants' in achieving desired outcomes of health status, appropriate social behavior, and lifelong learning⁴. These determinants have a direct parallel in the "benefits statements" - positive outcomes provided through recreation and parks, as shown on the next page.

³ National Forum on Health, Health Canada

⁴ **Health:** Towards A Common Understanding: Clarifying the Core Concepts of Population Health, a Discussion Paper, Prepared for the Working Group on Population Health Strategy, Health Canada December 1996; Toward a Healthy Future, Second Report on the Health of Canadians, Federal, Provincial and Territorial Advisory Committee on Population Health. Prepared for the Meeting of Ministers of Health, Charlottetown, PEI, September 1999; **Lifelong Learning:** Alberta Learning, Minister's Forum on Learning 1999, What we heard – March 2000, www.learning.gov.ab.ca/ministersforum/default.asp; **Crime Prevention:** Preventing Crime by Investing in Families, *An Integrated Approach to Promote Positive Outcomes in Children*, June 1996, www.crime-prevention.org/english/publications/children/family/index.html.

Recreation & Parks' Benefits Parallel The Determinants of Health



4 Categories of Recreation Benefits Statements⁵ (a full list of the 27 Benefits Statements is provided in Appendix 1)

12 Determinants of Health, appropriate Social Behavior and Lifelong Learning.

⁵ *The Benefits of Parks and Recreation: A Catalogue*, Parks and Recreation Federation of Ontario, 1992.

Change, Yes, But What Kind of Change?

Recreation practitioners need to shift their narrow vision of recreation and parks' potential to one of appreciating the broader role it needs to fulfill in our changing society.

-K. R. Balmer

Recognition of the need to change within the recreation and parks sector appears to be as strong as it has in the past. In fact, it appears that the recognition is of a need for transformative change. Balmer⁶, quoted senior decision makers on this point when he noted "*Too many recreation practitioners are too narrow in their vision of recreation's potential. They tend to be almost exclusively concerned about accumulating and managing physical plants and conducting highly structured programs...rather than appreciating the broader role recreation needs to fulfill in our changing society.*"

AND

In speaking to his audience, Balmer noted that these senior decision makers had also said "*Narrow views of recreation and parks are no longer supportable and many traditional approaches are not viewed as essential services. It is your potential to support and respond to community lifestyle and environment issues of the 1990's that is well understood and respected.*"

The future is not someplace we are going to, but one we are creating. The paths are not to be found, but made, and, the activity of making them changes both the maker and the destination.

-John Schnarr, Region
18 CFSA Service Plan

The current decision to set strategic directions for the recreation and parks sector for the next 10 years incorporates the inevitability of change. But what will be the nature of that change? To what end will the sector 'build on strong foundations'? What is the context in which these strategic directions will be implemented? These questions are harder to answer at this time, as we are in a time of enormous social, economic, scientific and technological transformation. The complete nature of this transformation is not completely clear but, like a polaroid picture developing, some of the major characteristics are starting to come to the surface

One question for recreation and parks is whether the sector wishes to position itself to respond effectively to changes created by others, or, to be a proactive agent in shaping that change. This report assumes the latter as, in part, the marginalization of recreation and parks is a consequence of responding to changes created by others. It is also a major opportunity created by the other worldview changes, and so should at least be considered. This approach, however, demands sophisticated leadership at all levels of the sector, and acknowledges that co-creating a future will change both the external world and the recreation and parks sector itself.

⁶ Balmer, K.R., "The Past! The Present! The Future?" Nov 25/74, Page 10; Balmer, K.R. "Leisure Services in the '90s: Reaching our Potential, Recreation Alberta Vol 10/4, p21-26"

Five Elements of Strategic Considerations

There are five elements to the strategic considerations for setting long term directions for the recreation and parks sector:

Five elements of strategic considerations:

- ❖ *Desired end point on which strategic directions are focused*
- ❖ *Major characteristics of the overall approach – the worldview from which the strategic directions will be designed,*
- ❖ *Types of resources required to deliver that approach.*
- ❖ *Specific context for implementation – opportunities and threats.*
- ❖ *Recreation and parks sector's strengths and barriers.*

- ❖ The focal point that establishes the desired outcomes of the strategic directions. What are these strategic directions intended to accomplish? Desired outcomes include those in the external world, and those internal to the recreation and parks sector. The next section "A Desired Future" discusses this element.
- ❖ The major characteristics of an overall approach that is likely to achieve that desired future, from which specific strategic directions will be developed.
- ❖ The types of resources required to deliver strategies within the desired overall approach.
- ❖ The specific context in which the strategic directions will be implemented, and any opportunities or threats that it presents, and
- ❖ The recreation and parks sector's current strengths or opportunities in delivering those types of strategies, and what holds the sector back.

These 'strategic considerations' are discussed in the following sections, however the major preoccupation of this paper is the exploration of the second element – the major characteristics of an overall approach that is likely to achieve the desired future.

3. A Desired Future

Choosing a focus

The Alberta vision expressed in the Alberta Government Business Plan, 2000-2003 is:

***"A vibrant and prosperous province
where Albertans enjoy a superior quality of life and are
confident about the future,
for themselves and their children."***

Thinking of this vision as a statement of desired long-term outcomes rather than a slogan makes it an appropriate focal point for strategic effort by the recreation and parks sector.

The Alberta Government vision as a statement of desired long term outcomes provides the common focus for strategic directions of all sectors of Alberta society. It provides a common focus for the collaborative efforts of individuals, families, communities, private and not for profit sectors as well as the public sector.

This vision is an appropriate focal point for strategic directions for three reasons:

1. It is important to focus on the long-term vision, the ultimate result or outcome of our efforts, when acting. We need to keep an eye on the desired future when planning and selecting major strategies to guide our actions in social and economic policy, in the same way as it is important in other areas. For example, we focus down the highway and not on the ditch when we want to keep a car on the road. Wallenda, the famous tightrope walker recognized danger when he stopped focusing on the end of the cable and started to focus on 'not falling'. Focusing on the long term vision also helps ensure we are not seduced into directing our efforts at a desirable, but lesser outcome and therefore missing opportunities for achieving the broader, more fulfilling vision.
2. It is common to all Ministries in the Alberta government. Choosing a common vision is important because the social problems we face today are complex, requiring collaborative action from a number of disciplines, organizations and/or sectors. The efforts of all components of Alberta society – individuals, families and communities, private and not for profit sectors as well as the public sector must interact and build on each other's efforts. Only with a common vision can organizations choose a set of complementary strategies, each building on the unique strengths of the organization or sector and when combined, coming to the same end point.
3. It is a challenging vision, but very appropriate to our times, because it demonstrates that the standard of performance required for Alberta and Albertans to succeed in a rapidly changing world is higher than it was a decade ago, and much higher than it was 100 years ago when this province was established. ⁷

⁷ The expectations of people as to what constitutes health and wellbeing has risen gradually over the last century. The standard rose again in the 1980's when the standard of 'health' for individuals and communities moved from 'not sick' to 'wellbeing' as the World Health Organization defined health as: *Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.* This definition was established following the seminal Lalonde report in 1974, which identified that health was more than health services, and described the first of the factors that we call the 'determinants of health' today.

4. Building the Desired Future

Program Policy Framework

Strategic directions need to be grounded in an understanding of what it will take to achieve the superior quality of life expressed by the vision. The “benefits statements” confirm that recreation and parks sector can make a significant contribution.

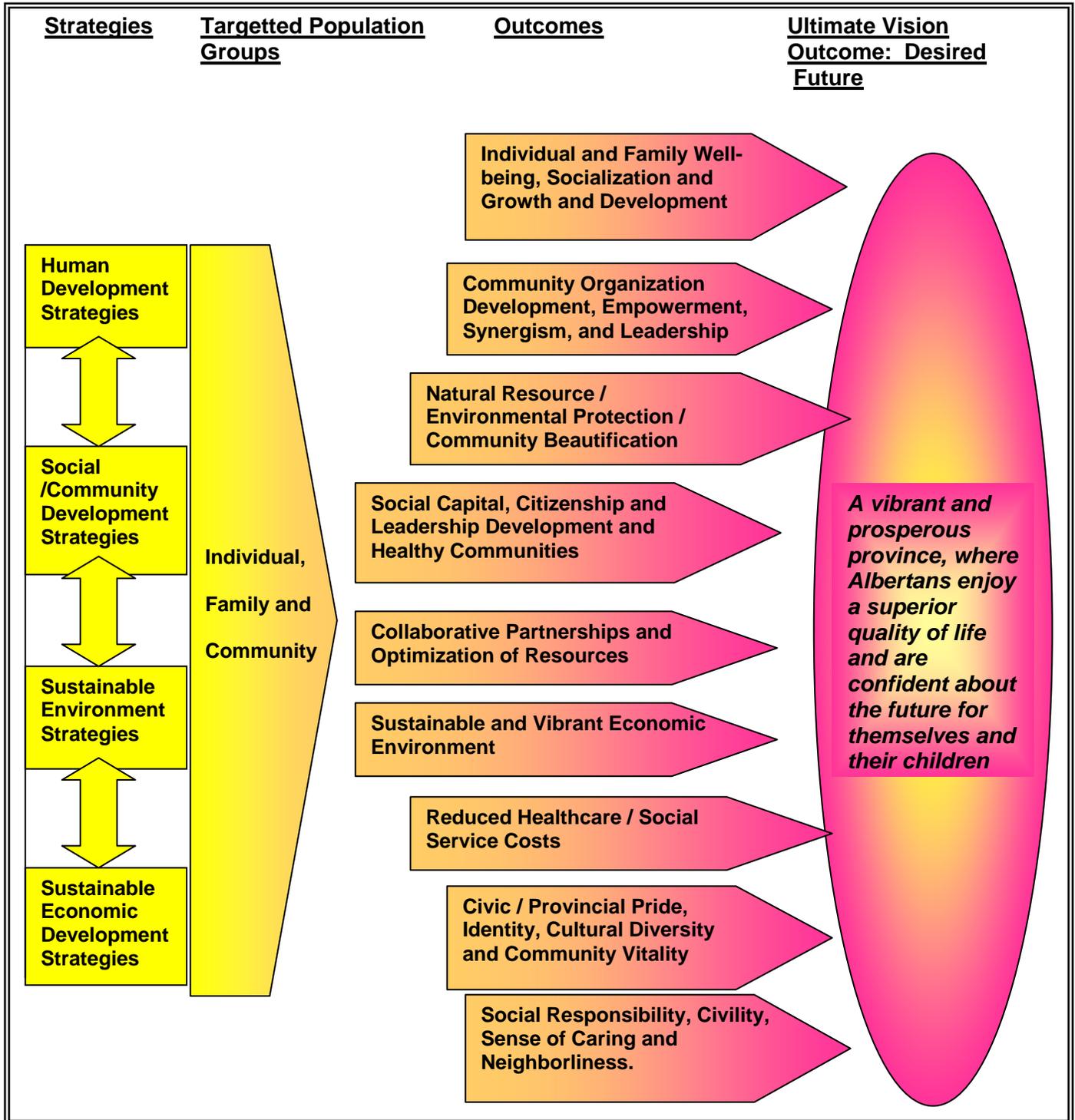
Strategic directions need to be grounded in an understanding of what it will take to achieve the superior quality of life expressed by the vision. The “benefits statements” confirm that recreation and parks’ sector can make a significant contribution, as illustrated in the diagram on the next page.

On the left of the diagram are four types of strategies, targeted to individuals, families and communities:

- ❖ human development strategies,
- ❖ social/community development strategies,
- ❖ sustainable environment strategies,
- ❖ sustainable economic development strategies.

The “benefits statements” are based on evidence that recreation and parks sector actions in these four types of strategies, achieve nine important outcomes. These are shown in the center of the diagram and are necessary components of the vision, shown on the far right as the ultimate desired outcome.

Diagram 1:
GOAL: Achieving a Superior Quality of Life



Overall Approach

The program policy framework broke the overall desired future endpoint into nine outcomes that would need to be achieved in order for that vision to be realized.

One of Alberta's challenges in achieving this vision is to make the shift from a sole focus on problems, such as crime, death, sickness, injury, violence, and suicide and on reducing these "deficits". Paradoxically, it will be most successful at dramatically reducing these "deficits" when it looks elsewhere for the solutions.

The second aspect of building a desired future is to consider the overall approach to be used in conceiving of the strategies to be used. The framework shows that these are clustered into four types of strategies, but does not speak to the overall approach, or philosophy to be used in their design and implementation.

Part of the choice of reacting to changes created by others, or being an agent in developing a desired future, is the choice of overall approach to be used. This aspect is particularly important to think about at this time, when the overall worldview of society is transforming, but is particularly challenging because the specific outcome of that transformation is not yet known.

One strategic direction for recreation and parks has been put forward – that of repositioning⁸. This proposal appears to advocate that the recreation and parks sector focus its strategies on building recognition among politicians and practitioners in other sectors (e.g. health, education, children's services, etc.) that recreation and parks strategies are effective at solving society's health and social problems. If successful, a repositioning approach should achieve a desirable outcome of moving recreation and parks from its current perceived marginalized position, to be seen as an equal player with other sectors in addressing the conundrums that we, as society, currently face.

"Repositioning" is rooted in a worldview of the past, where the focus is on deficit reduction in people as well as in budgets.

The overall approach on which this proposal is based will not achieve the Alberta vision, nor any of the nine intermediate outcomes shown in the previous diagram. Repositioning is rooted in the worldview of the past, where the focus is on deficit reduction – in people as well as in budgets. One of Alberta's challenges in achieving its vision is to make the difficult shift away from a focus on problems, such as crime, sickness, injury, violence, and suicide, and on reducing or eliminating these 'deficits'. Paradoxically, we will be most successful at dramatically reducing these 'deficits' when we look elsewhere (e.g. upstream) for the solutions.

⁸ Crompton and Witt identify three repositioning strategies: *Real repositioning*, which means that an agency changes what it does. *Competitive repositioning* means altering stakeholders' beliefs about what an agency's competitors do, and *Psychological repositioning* means altering stakeholders' beliefs about what an agency currently does. (Crompton, J.L. and Witt, P.A. (1977) "Repositioning, the Key to Building Community Support." *Parks and Recreation*. October.). The use of repositioning here is intended to refer to *Real Repositioning*, and to *Psychological Repositioning* that requires agencies to measure and then to communicate the success of their programs in achieving positive outcomes.

One of Alberta's challenges in achieving the vision is to make the difficult and concerted shift from a focus on problems such as crime, death, sickness, injury, violence and suicide, and on reducing or eliminating these deficits.

Initiatives based on this overall approach are limited by their own success, since once an acceptable level of a problem is achieved, effort and resources will be allocated only for maintenance of the situation. Only very rarely is complete eradication of the problems pursued, such as the elimination of smallpox worldwide. In this worldview, only when the incidence rises again are resources increased, because there are many more pressing problems to be resourced. The evolution of resources for infectious diseases such as tuberculosis or others having potential for epidemics is a case in point. An acceptable level of a problem is equivalent to 'not being sick'.

However the superior quality of life described in the Alberta vision is quite another thing than the 'reduction of disease and violence' or 'not being sick'.

Superior quality of life is more than 'just getting by, and being worried about sustainability'. Rather, 'vitality' evokes the picture of a person or community being 'the best that one can be', and 'continuous improvement' or 'continuous growth and development'. This is a term for a person with a sparkle in his/her eye, completely engaged in life, and, in more conservative terms, in a 'complete state of physical, social, emotional and spiritual well-being'⁹. This is a term for a community that 'teems' with action, enthusiasm and engagement of all of its members, with a solid sense of vibrancy and sustainability, both socially and economically.

Recreation and parks appears to be uniquely positioned to adapt its activities and approaches in ways that will be effective at achieving the Alberta vision.

So, repositioning might be part of an overall set of strategic directions, but the other directions must be based on a different overall more macro "upstream" approach.

An alternative is to use an overall approach more consistent with what we can see as part of the emerging worldview. This approach does act to correct the problems that society faces, but its power comes from thinking about the challenges differently.

Interestingly, this worldview is more congruent with the deep roots of recreation and parks, and so the sector appears to be uniquely positioned to take a leadership role in achieving the Alberta vision.

Thinking About the Challenge Differently

As noted earlier, there are a few characteristics of the new worldview that are starting to become clear:

⁹ World Health Organization; Definition of Health, 1982

Supporting growth and development in physical, emotional and intellectual capacity is far more effective than intervention and treatment after the fact, when conditions for illness, neglect or abuse have already developed... These reactive strategies will always be required, but should not be the focal point of strategic directions aimed at "superior quality of life."

a. Design for positive outcomes.

Focusing on desired, positive outcomes from the outset provides more opportunity for identifying strategies that will achieve them. This process is contrasted to the current approaches of identifying programs and then describing their associated outcomes, or of setting outcomes that involve the absence of something (e.g. reduction of heart disease, crime prevention). Use of a 'positive outcomes-based design process' facilitates the use of evidence about what works best.

The nine outcomes described in the previous diagram (Diagram 1) thus must be examined, to see what positive human and social /community factors are incorporated within them, and then to identify how those positive factors evolve and can be facilitated to grow and develop. These are intermediate outcomes.

For example, the kinds of intermediate outcomes for individuals, families and communities required to achieve these nine outcomes, and the Alberta vision include:

- ❖ Individual capacities such as muscular development and stamina, high self esteem, high social skills,
- ❖ Family capacity based on the synergy of the capacities of its members and a sustainable economic base, within an appropriate physical environment,
- ❖ Social/community capacity grounded in such factors as social cohesion, appreciation for differences, collective problem solving skills and conflict resolution skills that are more effective than violence.
- ❖ Technology and information that support healthy ways of living and working.
- ❖ Physical infrastructure that is capable of growing and changing as individuals, families and communities grow and change, as well as 'virtual infrastructure' enabling networks of people and supports gathering places.

Supporting growth and development in physical, emotional and intellectual capacity is far more effective than intervention and treatment after the fact, when risk conditions for illness, neglect or abuse have already developed.

In this worldview, reactive strategies, such as those for illness and injury treatment, or prevention of specific problems are still utilized – and are very important. However, the focus is on positive outcomes from all interventions.

Generative growth and development occurs when utilizing capacity in ways that are life enhancing in order to adapt to, respond to, control or maximize opportunities of life challenges and changes.

...the old worldview of "progress" and "growth and development" has created the very problems we must now solve because it assumes that unlimited growth in one dimension could happen without regard to other dimensions.

b. Use a "generative" growth and development focus

A framework is helpful, because it permits a clear conceptualization of the mechanisms that account for progress, and ways to measure and monitor it, so that assumptions can be tested and interventions refined in order to facilitate progress more effectively and with better value for effort. A general framework of progress based on a new worldview of growth and development¹⁰ incorporates a number of key elements:

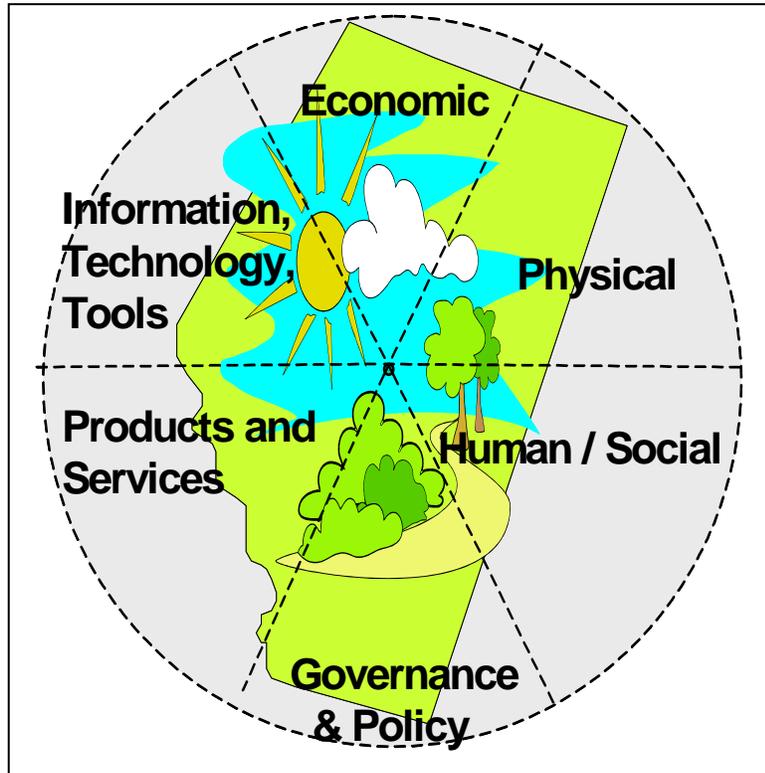
- ❖ It is a strength based approach, focusing on positive outcomes rather than the absence of negative ones.
- ❖ There are fundamental principles of 'growth and development' that apply equally to economic, environmental and human/social elements.
- ❖ Generative growth and development occurs when utilizing capacity in ways that are generative, or life enhancing in order to adapt to, respond to, control or maximize opportunities of life challenges and changes. Generative, or life enhancing means that the growth and development is life enhancing, it creates more strength, and does not act to limit or negatively impact the growth of others, or the environment.

"Generative" also signals that it is not the same as the 'progress' or 'growth and development' of the old worldview. That worldview of progress creates some of the very problems we must now solve because it assumes that unlimited growth in one dimension could happen without regard to other dimensions. In other words, the economy could experience unlimited growth without affecting, or being affected by, more limited growth in human and social dimensions. The emergence of 'sustainable development' recognizes that neither economic development nor the physical environment are sustainable if one operates in ways that are destructive to the other.

- ❖ Capacity is comprised of many factors, clustered into six domains. The diagram below illustrates capacity of the Province of Alberta but these domains apply equally well to individuals, communities, companies and countries. In life, these are in constant interaction with one another, represented by the dotted lines.

¹⁰ Matthias, S.J., A General Framework of Progress: Growth and Development – A New Worldview (2001)
www.matthias.ca

Generative growth and development permits unlimited growth because all elements – economic, human/social and environmental must grow in a balanced fashion. ... Because they are not limited by their own success, strategies based on this approach can achieve the “superior quality of life” required by the Alberta vision.



People or communities are in constant, dynamic interaction with their environment, comprised of life challenges and changes that may be positive, negative or neutral. In some cases what seems like a negative challenge turns out to have been a positive one. This interaction creates change, which can be generative or non-generative.

- ❖ Growth and development, creation of greater capacity to meet life challenges and changes, occurs when a ‘generative pattern of response’ is used to harness capacity into productive strategies. Non-generative responses include resorting to addictive behavior, stagnation and even death.
- ❖ Generative growth and development permits unlimited growth. All elements – economic, human/social and environmental must grow in a balanced fashion. One element can expand continuously only if other elements also expand continuously. In other words, unlimited economic expansion is possible only with concurrent growth in human / social and physical environment elements of a community. Because it is not limited by its own success, strategies based on this approach can achieve high standards such as the Alberta vision.

- ❖ Growth and development in all elements – economic, environmental, and human/social is incremental. This quality allows tracking of improvements over short time frames, as well as ‘positive outcome-based design processes’, and development of business cases to assess alternative investment strategies.
- ❖ Individuals, families, communities, provinces and larger groupings of people are interdependent. Such situations as Y2K and the economic impact on local Alberta communities from difficulties in the Asian economies demonstrate that our challenges, and our ability to cope with those challenges, require attention to our interdependencies. Interdependency means we need to collaborate to solve problems and thus we must improve our mechanisms of working together for common desired outcomes.

This new worldview of growth and development has a number of policy implications that make it a possible approach for achieving the Alberta vision. For example, it has different assumptions about human capital than the current economic models on which current policies are based. These assume that the productivity peaks at a fairly young age and deteriorates consistently thereafter. The approach espoused here would consider human capital as expanding throughout life, with the dimensions of growth being emotional, social and spiritual as well as physical, and cognitive.

Resources and Infrastructure Required

Resources to implement strategic directions using this approach include human resources, information, and financial resources as well as physical and virtual infrastructure. Whether it is possible to achieve these requirements must be considered when selecting strategic directions.

Successful implementation requires strong leadership skills in all people. Also, achieving this vision requires all sectors of society to collaborate and to ensure their strategies can achieve the standard of outcomes required. Thus, people involved in implementing strategic directions must have high social and emotional skills as well as the necessary physical and cognitive skills, and strong change management skills. They must have a highly developed understanding of the desired vision, the ability to assess a changing environment and the judgment to adapt strategies to keep the strategic directions focused on the desired outcome.

Information will be a critical resource. This includes continuous information on what is working and thus require commitment to appropriate evaluation and research. It also includes effective mechanisms for dissemination of required information, and establishment and monitoring of appropriate performance indicators. Part of this requirement could be met by collaboration with other Ministries such as Alberta Health and Wellness, Health Surveillance Branch so that the information would automatically be included in planning material used by regional health authorities.

Physical infrastructure must be appropriate to continuous growth and change, so that it can continuously support the evolution of people and communities. Virtual infrastructure, to support networks of people, communities and organizations will be necessary to permit the combination of resources in new ways and the creative co-developments that are associated with generative growth and development.

Another part of the resources and infrastructure required is access to the planning, designing and implementation of initiatives. This requires the ability to sit at municipal, provincial and federal government tables.

Key to implementing any strategic direction will be skills for working together, and facilitating others working together. Strategic alliances will require evolution of skills in working together.

The way we work together is important

Key to implementing any strategic direction will be skills for working together, and facilitating others working together. There are a number of levels of competency at 'working together', ranging from coordination, collaboration, integration, to operating as a strategic alliance. The policy challenges of the century require sectors and organizations to evolve to the development of strategic alliances. Organizations and disciplines have traditionally operated in 'silos' that do not work together well, and have started to work together in groups. However these groups are usually difficult to maintain, since they depend so strongly on personal relationships between those who are working together. Evolving further requires the rigorous thinking and planning, and agreement on what outcomes are valuable to all, that is associated with the development of strategic alliances.

5. Recreation and Parks Sector

This report does not provide an exhaustive analysis of the recreation and parks sector's capacity to choose strategic directions that involve a leadership role in creating the desired future. This would not necessarily be an easy choice, because

The recreation and parks sector has a number of potential strengths to take a new approach to achieving the Alberta vision: its current and latent networks, and the evidence provided by the “benefits statements”.

The sector is uniquely positioned as a broker to link human/social, economic and environmental outcomes, as well as to infrastructure.

Whether recreation and parks can achieve the required resources – human, information, and financial, as well as physical and virtual infrastructure – must be considered when selecting strategic directions.

moving from a marginalized position to a leadership position requires as much or more capacity development within the sector as it does without.

Nevertheless, as has been identified before, the sector does have some unique characteristics that provide the potential to take on this approach, and it is useful to provide some preliminary idea of where these might lie.

Potential Strengths

Recreation offers networks of community sport, arts and culture facilities, parks and programs that attract people in their regular daily lives.

The roots of recreation and parks are in building capacity and coaching a ‘generative pattern of response’, whether in the play, outdoor recreation, physical activity, sports, arts or culture world.

The sector has both horizontal networks at the municipal level and vertical networks through the provincial and federal levels.

The sector has a ‘latent network’ of professionals and practitioners who have moved to other fields. These include fields outside the health and human services sector that are normally difficult to demonstrate the interaction between social, economic and environmental policy.

The “benefits statements” provide clear evidence of the role that recreation plays in human, social, environmental and economic development – see *Appendix 1: 27 Benefits Statements*.

A summary of the recreation and parks sector’s potential contribution to achieving the business plans of Alberta Government Ministries is provided in Appendix 2. It cross matches the 27 benefits statements to Ministries’ goals and objectives within their business plans.

Recreation and parks is uniquely positioned as a helpful broker to the human and social, economic and environmental Ministries, since it is one of the few sectors that has links to human, economic and environmental outcomes as well as to Infrastructure.

“It’s Not About Time”¹¹ describes the critical importance of ‘leisure ability’ and establishes the case for leisure’s true meaning as ‘the experience of living a moment of positive self expression’, an

¹¹ Joe Pavelka, “It’s Not About Time: Rediscovering Leisure in a Changing World”. (2000), Carp Ontario: Creative Bound Inc.

We can no longer afford to ignore, or demean, all the ways in which people can grow and develop, and can contribute to their community and thus to Alberta's achievements. Rather, 'meaningful activity' needs to be understood as one that recognizes contribution to community capacity and facilitates a pattern of 'generative growth and development'.

Understanding and embracing the true nature of 'leisure' will be critical to Alberta's success in achieving the vision.

experience rather than an old worldview of leisure as 'the time remaining after one's work and maintenance responsibilities have been addressed.' Pavelka identifies the six pillars of leisure as being: freedom, choice, self-expression, arousal, flow and stress avoidance.

These concepts of leisure identify a potential strength of the recreation and parks sector in establishing strategic directions on this new generative growth and development approach.

The recreation and parks sector provides significant "meaningful activity"

We have traditionally identified "work", and in age appropriate cases, "school" as meaningful activities (as long as the schooling is in aim of getting a job and being economically independent). However, limiting 'meaningful activity' to work and school creates a tendency to ignore, or dismiss other avenues of growth and development, and other means of contributing to a community's capacity. The economic contribution is an important one, but is not the only one.

We can no longer afford to ignore, or demean, all the ways in which people can grow and develop, and can contribute to their community and thus to Alberta's achievements. Rather, the description of meaningful activity needs to be one that recognizes an activity's contribution to community capacity, and that also recognizes the importance of facilitating development of a 'generative pattern of response'. Being able to contribute economically will be a component of one's meaning then, not the main reason for being.

For example, the recognition that economic development is significantly affected by social cohesion is becoming more widely known. Our communities' capacity and our social cohesion depend on the contributions made by volunteers and family caregivers, yet these contributions are not respected in the traditional measurements of a society's productivity. The same is true of household support, whether housework or car and yard maintenance. The Genuine Progress Indicator is an approach born of the need to have a measure of our overall balance of progress. As we have an aging population, and more and more people are retired from active employment, this will become more and more critical.

An expanded view of education – education for life – is now perceived as the strategy that will see “learners” through the 21st century and beyond!

This expanded perspective of education requires new skills. Advancing the area of leisure and human development can meet this need.

Nazareth¹² uses this approach in noting that “*the accelerated pace of change especially in the nature of work and in the amount of unobligated time brings with it changing needs. The functionalist knowledge model, which promotes learning for earning a living, is a deficient one in our present age. This is so because many people do not possess the requisite real-life skills separate from employment skills and are not able to use their discretionary time in productive ways. An expanded view of education – education for life – is now perceived as the strategy that will see learners through the 21st century and beyond. This expanded perspective of education requires new skills. Advancing the area of leisure and human development can meet this need. The principles of lifelong learning constitute a powerful framework on which to build leisure and human development activities.*

Using this understanding of ‘meaningful activity’, the recreation and parks sectors’ contribution is invaluable in at least three ways.

- ❖ One contribution is through the skills and knowledge that people develop by participating in a recreation activity – whether play, outdoor recreation, physical activity, sports, arts or culture. Each of these teaches ‘generative patterns of response’ – setting achievable goals, assessing personal skills and potential, practicing to improve, reflecting on experiences to see what can be learned. At its best, the coaching function facilitates such a pattern of response. Nazareth notes the four pillars identified by UNESCO (Delors 1996) as being the foundations of education throughout life: Learning to be, Learning to know, Learning to do, and Learning to live together. “*For people to function effectively in a world of accelerating change, knowledge and skills that promote improvement in quality of life and foster personal development during the lifespan of the individual are seen to be equally important*”.
- ❖ Another would be that leisure activities can be a generative pattern of response to stress, contrasted to such risk behaviors as substance abuse, work addictions, overeating

¹² Dr. Theresa Celine Nazareth. A lifespan Orientation Towards Leisure and Human Development: A Coherent Perspective for the 21st Century. Dr. Nazareth noted that many conceptions of lifelong learning exist. Lifelong learning implies both vertical integration (that is, the coordination of learning experiences at different times of life) and horizontal integration (or the coordination of the diverse range of learning experiences, where education and life are linked). Lifelong learning can have an instrumental purpose, for example, for professional currency or to be competitive, and it can also occur for human developmental reasons.

Leisure education [to Nazareth] refers to conscious learning or learning that is intended and systematic, and does not necessarily contribute to or have a terminal goal, for example, a job, certification or competition. In particular, her paper refers to cultural, artistic and sporting pursuits which involve training / learning / skill development rather than pure entertainment or amusement.

Recreation and parks' contribution is invaluable in at least three ways:

- ❖ *developing skills and knowledge and a 'generative pattern of response'.*
- ❖ *effective and life enhancing response to stress and thus increasing productivity.*
- ❖ *creating social cohesion in a diverse society, and enhancing social skills required for work in the 21st century.*

From this vantage, the greatest disease-reducing and health enhancing outcomes leisure or fitness programs engender may relate more to the socializing they create than the cardiopulmonary functioning they increase and the endorphins they release."¹³

and so on. This concept is described by Nazareth: "Leisure here does not refer to casual leisure (Stebbins 1992) in the sense of sensory stimulation or 'edutainment', where learning may occur inadvertently. As the term use here implies a more participative role than for example, media-influenced leisure, and as perseverance is inherent, it is closer in meaning to serious leisure as described by Stebbins (1992). Although with serious leisure Stebbins (1992) alludes to leisure that may lead to a career, the stance taken here is that leisure participants are more intent on developing human capacities. This notion of leisure can be better regarded as the development of human capacities model of leisure or as committed leisure, as such leisure involves skill development for intrinsic, relaxation or social purposes."

This important contribution is confirmed in a recent study that showed *specific leisure strategies are also identified as an important element of improving productivity for executives in fast paced work environments.*¹³ In this application, leisure provides balance.

- ❖ Still another is the creation of opportunities for people of diverse backgrounds, socio-economic situations, and capacity to come together in social groups, with the subsequent development of higher order social skills. For example, Labonte notes that, "in their examination of the relationship between leisure and health, Coleman and Iso-Ahola (1993) have indicated the ways in which leisure generated social support can serve as a buffer against life stress and moderator of negative life events.

Social skills are critical work skills in the 21st century. The Conference Board of Canada, in setting out the necessary skills of workers identifies not only work related knowledge and skills, but also the high level of social skills required to work effectively in teams, and the personal attributes of self esteem and personal responsibility that can effectively be learned in recreation endeavors.

Potential Barriers

Recreation and parks has some potential barriers to address when establishing strategic directions:

Recognition of the "benefits statements" is largely limited to the recreation field itself. The benefits of recreation and parks in addressing social problems, and the benefit of leisure in

¹³ The Corporate Athlete, Harvard Business Review, January 2001

Recreation and parks has some potential barriers to address when establishing strategic directions, including:

- ❖ *recognition that the benefits statements are largely limited to the recreation field itself.*
- ❖ *'leisure' is usually associated with recreation and parks and is not yet seen as a meaningful activity.*

The recreation and parks sector appears very fragmented, with few established mechanisms for collaborative planning or strategy development across the play, outdoor recreation, physical activity, sports, arts, culture and parks fields. This makes it difficult to mount a cohesive initiative.

maintaining productivity in a fast paced world are not well known in the policy arena, and the predominant attention to “value for money” during the time of deficit reduction has intensified this perspective. The public is not demanding an increase in recreation and parks in the concern for improved health services and education.

Recreation and parks sector does not appear to have a significant research capacity.

The term ‘recreation’ is related to ‘sports’ or ‘physical activities’ or ‘fitness’ in peoples’ minds, so the support of those who prefer arts, culture or library leisure activities are limited.

‘Leisure’ is usually related to recreation and parks and is not yet seen as a “meaningful activity”, but rather is perceived of as ‘not work’. The concept of ‘serious leisure’, or ‘leisure as balance and learning’ connected to a lifelong learning agenda is not understood by the public or by policy developers.

The sector lacks a network of relationships with the provincial Ministries and regional authorities in health, children’s services and education. While the human and social sector has identified the importance of working together to achieve goals, recreation and parks are not often identified as natural partners. Recreation does not use a common language to the other sectors (e.g. ‘benefits’ vs ‘determinants’). Recreation shares with all the potential partners the lack of a common worldview of how social problems evolve and of the most effective ways to address them.

The sector appears outside of unification efforts by ARPA, very fragmented, with little or no established mechanisms for collaborative planning or strategy development across the play, outdoor recreation, physical activity, sports, arts, culture and parks fields. This lack makes it very difficult to mount a cohesive initiative aimed at public and policy assumptions, or to maintain an effective measurement and communication strategy that would build awareness of what the services offered by the sector achieve.

While recreation and parks have many natural advantages in a ‘building capacity’ or growth and development strategic approach, the readiness across the whole sector to move to this approach is not comprehensive. It will take effort to build capacity within the sector at the same time as external demands are rising.

There is a huge established physical infrastructure for recreation programming that may not lend itself to continuous growth and change, although this might be possible to address during any capital upgrading initiatives.

Potential Opportunities

Moving from a marginalized perspective to a leadership perspective requires a change both in capacity and attitude for the recreation and parks sector.

One major opportunity is demographics. Recreation and parks has much to offer both baby boomers retiring and traversing their midlife developmental stage, as well as to youth, in those areas of the province that are experiencing significant growth.

One opportunity is provided by demographics as the next 10 years will see a major shift of baby boomers from the workplace but, who are still active and needing meaningful activity. Recreation and parks might provide helpful approaches to traversing the midlife developmental stage in healthy ways. Also, in areas of the population with rapid growth, recreation and parks provide a traditional connection for healthy transition of the youth developmental stage.

While focusing on the social problems would be to catch the current strategic wave, it would not position the sector for a leadership role in the next wave. One option would be to become involved in initiatives related to social problems in order to develop the network of intersectoral relationships necessary, while, at the same time, building internal capacity for a growth and development approach and staying alert for opportunities to implement it. It may well be that the opportunity for such an approach will come through the economic development side, where a community capacity element is seen as an important variable.

There are a number of specific opportunities to become involved in initiatives that address social problems, and where recreation and parks would undoubtedly be welcomed. These include:

- ❖ Task forces within the Alberta Children and Youth Initiative, including FAS (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome), Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution (PCIP), Children at Risk;
- ❖ Justice, and the National Crime Prevention Coalition. One door might be the federal funding for addressing the determinants of health / positive social functioning is provided to communities.
- ❖ Community care initiatives that help seniors and persons in the disabled communities to live productively in the community.
- ❖ Specific health issues such as obesity, diabetes, children's mental health, eating disorders. This would require partnerships at the regional level.
- ❖ Training sports coaches to work effectively with children and youth with FAS, and to understand the underlying factors to eating disorders.

Existing initiatives that operate on a growth and development strategy are less common, but those that exist offer great opportunities for recreation and parks.

The recreation and parks sector has a 'latent network' existing through all sectors, of people originally trained as recreation and parks practitioners. Activating this network in support of collaborating to achieve the Alberta vision is a major opportunity.

- ❖ Early Childhood Development is a major policy initiative being rolled out with federal /provincial collaboration. The specific mechanisms for involvement may be at the community or regional level, though exploring the provincial governance mechanisms for a potential role would be useful.
- ❖ The Aboriginal policy framework is aimed at improving capacity in aboriginal communities and would be important to become familiar with.

As noted, the recreation and parks sector has a 'latent network' existing throughout all sectors, of people originally trained as recreation and parks professionals and practitioners. Activating this network in support of collaborating to achieve the Alberta vision is a major opportunity.

6. Conclusions

As noted throughout the document, recreation has a potential to play an important role in the human and social, environmental and economic domains. This document focuses on the potential within the human and social domains.

There is certainly no limit to potential areas in which the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association might choose to focus its resources in order to raise the profile and contribution of the recreation and parks sector to meeting the policy issues of this century and to achieving the "Alberta vision".

In considering options for specific strategic directions, recreation and parks should first make a strategic decision about the overall approach that will be used. There is an opportunity to reposition to highlight recreation and parks' ability to assist in preventing or minimizing social problems, or to adopt a different approach, one based on a new worldview of growth and development.

Once strategic directions have been established, a change management strategy can be developed to provide the necessary transition to having the necessary capacity to take a leadership role in moving forward those strategic directions.

This paper outlines an approach that would be a mechanism for achieving the challenges that have been posed in the past. For example, Labonte quotes Henderson's challenging the recreation sector¹⁴: "... *the emerging task for leisure researchers and, by*

¹⁴ Labonte, R. Community Empowerment and Leisure, Leisurability, 23 (1)

'Thinking about the challenge differently', to guide selection of strategic directions, includes:

- ❖ *Focusing on the Alberta vision as a long term, positive statement of desired outcome.*
- ❖ *Shift to a preoccupation with 'fostering generative growth and development'.*
- ❖ *Facilitate an evolution of understanding of 'leisure' and 'meaningful activity'.*
- ❖ *Develop strategic alliances to integrate strategies across human and social/ community development, economic development and evolution of the physical environment.*

extension, leisure practitioners is '...how can we...influence... change in the most positive way? What role do we have as leisure researchers in creating social change...? How is our research making the world a better place to live?'. (p3)" ... How do the programs and services offered in the names of leisure, recreation, fitness, active living, health promotion and, so on, embody the empowering ethic of their more pregnant meaning? What new practice stance is implied by a commitment to community empowerment, in which leisure practitioners accept the responsibility of becoming change agents at both micro (individual) and macro (societal) levels?"

In summary, 'thinking about the challenge differently' to guide selection of strategic directions, as set out in this report, includes:

- ❖ Focusing on long term, challenging, positive outcomes;
- ❖ Shifting from a preoccupation with 'fixing problems and deficits' to 'fostering generative growth and development';
- ❖ Facilitating an evolution of understanding of 'leisure' and 'meaningful activity'.
- ❖ Developing strategic alliances to integrate strategies across four domains – human and social / community development, economic development and evolution of the physical environment (natural and built). This paper focuses on the human and social / community domains, but the larger picture needs to incorporate all four.

Appendix 1: 27 Benefits Statements

BENEFITS STATEMENTS

1. PERSONAL BENEFITS

- 1.1 Physical recreation and fitness contribute to a FULL AND MEANINGFUL LIFE.
- 1.2 Regular physical activity is one of the very best methods of HEALTH INSURANCE for individuals.
- 1.3 Relaxation, rest and revitalization through the opportunity of leisure is ESSENTIAL TO STRESS MANAGEMENT in today's busy and demanding world.
- 1.4 Meaningful leisure activity is an essential source of SELF-ESTEEM AND POSITIVE SELF-IMAGE.
- 1.5 Leisure provides the opportunity to LEAD BALANCED LIVES, ACHIEVE OUR FULL POTENTIAL AND GAIN LIFE SATISFACTION.
- 1.6 Children's play is essential to the HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS.
- 1.7 Leisure opportunities for youth provide POSITIVE LIFESTYLE CHOICES AND ALTERNATIVES TO SELF-DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOUR.
- 1.8 Parks and open spaces bring beauty to an area while giving people SATISFACTION AND IMPROVING THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE.

2. SOCIAL BENEFITS

- 2.1 Leisure provides leadership opportunities that BUILD STRONG COMMUNITIES.
- 2.2 Community recreation reduces ALIENATION, LONELINESS AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOURS.
- 2.3 Community recreation PROMOTES ETHNIC AND CULTURAL HARMONY.
- 2.4 Recreating together BUILDS STRONG FAMILIES, the foundation of a stronger society.
- 2.5 Leisure provides opportunities for COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, AND SHARED MANAGEMENT AND OWNERSHIP OF RESOURCES.
- 2.6 INTEGRATED AND ACCESSIBLE LEISURE SERVICES are critical to the quality of life of people with a disability and disadvantaged individuals.
- 2.7 Leisure opportunities, facilities and the quality of the local environment are the FOUNDATIONS OF COMMUNITY PRIDE.
- 2.8 Leisure services enrich and complement protective services for LATCHKEY CHILDREN through after school and other recreational services.

3. ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- 3.1 Pay now or pay more later! Investment in recreation as a PREVENTATIVE HEALTH SERVICE makes sense.
- 3.2 A fit work force is a PRODUCTIVE WORK FORCE.
- 3.3 Small investments in recreation yield BIG ECONOMIC RETURNS.
- 3.4 Parks and recreation services motivate BUSINESS RELOCATION AND EXPANSION in your community.
- 3.5 Meaningful leisure services REDUCE THE HIGH COST OF VANDALISM AND CRIMINAL ACTIVITY.
- 3.6 Recreation and park services are often the CATALYST FOR TOURISM, a growing sector of our economy.
- 3.7 INVESTMENTS IN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION through the provision of parks and open spaces PAY FOR THEMSELVES.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- 4.1 Through the provision of parks, open spaces and protected natural environments, recreation can contribute to the ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH of our communities. This is an essential, life-sustaining role.
- 4.2 The public is often prepared to pay for ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND REHABILITATION in their communities, and to support parks and recreation organizations that play a lead role in that protection.
- 4.3 INVESTING IN THE ENVIRONMENT through parks and the provision of open space in residential areas, leads to an increase in neighbourhood property values through accessibility to environmentally friendly green spaces and associated recreation opportunities.
- 4.4 The trend toward natural environment based leisure activities is INSURANCE FOR A NEW AND IMPROVED ENVIRONMENTAL FUTURE.

These benefits statements are reprinted from *The Benefits of Parks and Recreation: a Catalogue*, Parks and Recreation Federation of Ontario, 1992.

Appendix 2: Recreation and Parks Support of Alberta Government Ministry Business Plans

The 2000 – 2003 Alberta Government Ministry Business Plans were assessed in terms of the degree to which recreation and parks strategies could make a contribution to each Ministry's goals and objectives, described in their Business (whether or not the strategy was explicitly identified as a recreation and parks strategy). The 27 Benefits Statements were used as the categorization for recreation and parks strategies.

In the table covering the following four pages, the 27 Benefits Statements are arranged along the top, and the Alberta Government Ministries along the left margin. The Ministries are categorized into four broad sections:

- ❖ Health and Human Services Ministries,
- ❖ Environment Ministries
- ❖ Economic Ministries
- ❖ Other

In some cases there is overlap. Those Ministries whose responsibilities relate to sustainable economic development while sustaining the environment or key resources are placed between purely Economic Ministries and purely Environment Ministries. Where a Ministry covers both Health and Human Services and Environment (e.g. Municipal Affairs) or Economic (e.g. Human Resources and Employment) or all three (e.g. Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development), they are placed in only one category.

Each Ministry and Benefits Statement is then compared, and one of three levels of contribution identified:

- χ Recreation benefits have a direct link to Ministry outcomes
- Recreation benefits have an indirect link to Ministry outcomes
- ♣ Not identified in the Business Plan but high potential for impact.

One of the Benefits Statements applies to all Ministries in a specific manner:

- Potential for impact through improved staff productivity.

		Benefits Statements 1.1 – 1.8: Personal Benefits								
		1.1 Physical recreation and fitness contributes to a full and meaningful life.	1.2 Regular physical activity is one of the very best methods of health insurance for individuals	1.3 Relaxation, rest and revitalization through the opportunity of leisure is essential to stress management in today's busy and demanding world.	1.4 Meaningful leisure activity is an essential source of self esteem and positive self image	1.5 Leisure provides the opportunity to lead balanced lives, achieve our full potential and gain life satisfaction.	1.6 Children's play is essential to the human development process.	1.7 Leisure opportunities for youth provide positive lifestyle choices and alternatives to self-destructive behaviour.	1.8 Parks and open spaces bring beauty to an area while giving people satisfaction and improving their quality of life.	
Health and Human Services	Health and Wellness	χ	χ	χ	χ	χ	χ	χ	χ	
	Community Development	χ				*		χ	χ	
	Children's Services	χ	□	□	χ	χ	χ	χ		
	Justice	χ	χ	χ	χ	χ	χ	χ	χ	
	Learning	χ		*	χ	χ	χ	χ		
	Seniors	χ	χ		χ	χ		□	□	
	Solicitor General	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		
Economic	Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development	χ	*	*	*	□	χ	χ	□	
	Human Resources & Employment	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		
	Economic Development								□	
	Energy									
	Finance									
	Gaming									
	Revenue									
	Sustainable Resource Development						*		χ	
	Agriculture & Rural Development								*	
	Environment						*		χ	
Environment	Infrastructure								χ	
	Municipal Affairs									
	Gov't Services									
	Transportation									
	Innovation & Science									
	Other	International & Intergov't Aff's								

χ Recreation benefits have a direct link to Ministry outcomes
 □ Recreation benefits have indirect link to Ministry outcomes

*Not identified in Business Plan but high potential for impact

		Benefits Statements 2.1 – 2.8: Social / Community Benefits							
		2.1 Leisure provides leadership opportunities that build strong communities.	2.2 Community recreation reduces alienation, loneliness, and antisocial behaviors.	2.3 Community recreation promotes ethnic and cultural harmony.	2.4 Recreating together builds strong families, the foundation of a stronger society.	2.5 Leisure provides opportunities for community involvement and shared management and ownership of resources.	2.6 Integrated and accessible leisure services are critical to the quality of life of people with a disability and disadvantaged individuals	2.7 Leisure opportunities, facilities and the quality of the local environment are the foundations of community pride.	2.8 Leisure services enrich and complement protective services for latchkey children through after school and other recreational
Health and Human Services	Health and Wellness	χ	χ	χ	χ	χ	χ	χ	χ
	Community Development	χ	□	χ	χ	χ	χ	χ	□
	Children's Services	□	χ	□	χ		χ		χ
	Justice	□	χ	□	□	χ		□	□
	Learning		χ	□	χ				□
	Seniors	*	□	*	□	*	χ		
	Solicitor General	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
	Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development	*	*	χ	*	χ	*	*	□
Economic	Human Resources & Employment	*	*	*	*		*	*	
	Economic Development	□				□		□	
	Energy								
	Finance								
	Gaming								
	Revenue								
	Sustainable Resource Development					χ		χ	
	Agriculture & Rural Development								
	Environment					χ		χ	
	Infrastructure					χ		χ	
	Municipal Affairs								
	Gov't Services								
	Transportation								
	Other	Innovation & Science							
International & Intergov't Aff's									

χ Recreation benefits have a direct link to Ministry outcomes
□ Recreation benefits have indirect link to Ministry outcomes

*Not identified in Business Plan but high potential for impact

		Benefits Statements 3.1 – 3.7: Economic Benefits						
		3.1 Pay now or pay more later! Investment in recreation as a preventative health services makes sense	3.2 A fit work force is a productive work force.	3.3 Small investments in recreation yield big economic returns.	3.4 Parks and recreation services motivate business relocation and expansion in your community.	3.5 Meaningful leisure services reduce the high cost of vandalism and criminal activity.	3.6 Integrated recreation and park services are often the catalyst for tourism, a growing sector of our economy.	3.7 Investments in environmental protection through the provision of parks and open spaces pay for themselves.
Health and Human Services	Health and Wellness	χ	χ☐	χ				☐
	Community Development		χ☐	χ	☐	χ	☐	χ
	Children's Services		☐			χ		
	Justice	*	☐			χ		
	Learning		☐					
	Seniors	*	☐					
	Solicitor General		☐			χ		
	Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development		☐	☐	☐	☐		☐
	Human Resources & Employment		☐					
	Economic Development		☐	χ	χ		χ	χ
Environment	Energy		☐		☐			
	Finance	☐	☐		☐			
	Gaming		☐	χ				
	Revenue		☐	χ	☐		☐	☐
	Sustainable Resource Development		☐					χ
	Agriculture & Rural Development		☐	☐	☐			☐
	Environment		☐					χ
	Infrastructure		☐		☐	☐	☐	χ
	Municipal Affairs		☐				☐	
	Gov't Services		☐					
Other	Transportation		☐				☐	
	Innovation & Science		☐					
	International & Intergov't Aff's		☐		☐			

χ Recreation benefits have a direct link to Ministry outcomes
☐ Recreation benefits have indirect link to Ministry outcomes

*Not identified in Business Plan but high potential for impact
☐ Potential for impact through staff productivity

		Benefits Statements 4.1 – 4.4: Environmental Benefits			
		4.1 Through the provision of parks, open spaces and protected natural environments, recreation can contribute to the environmental health of our communities. This is an essential, life-sustaining role.	4.2 The public is often prepared to pay for environmental protection and rehabilitation in their communities, and to support parks and recreation organizations that play a lead role in that protection	4.3 Investing in the environment through parks and the provision of open space in residential areas, leads to an increase in neighborhood property values through accessibility to environmentally friendly open spaces and associated recreation opportunities.	4.4 The trend toward natural environment based leisure activities is insurance for a new and improved environmental future.
Health and Human Services	Health and Wellness	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	Community Development	χ	χ	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Children's Services				
	Justice				
	Learning				
	Seniors				
	Solicitor General				
Economic	Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Human Resources & Employment				
	Economic Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	χ	χ	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Energy		<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Finance				
	Gaming				
	Revenue				
	Sustainable Resource Development	χ	χ		χ
	Agriculture & Rural Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Environment	χ	χ	χ	χ
Environment	Infrastructure	χ	<input type="checkbox"/>	χ	
	Municipal Affairs			χ	
	Gov't Services				
	Transportation				
	Innovation & Science				
	International & Intergov't Aff's				
	Other				

χ Recreation benefits have a direct link to Ministry outcomes
 Recreation benefits have indirect link to Ministry outcomes

*Not identified in Business Plan but high potential for impact