



**2013-2016
STRATEGIC PLAN**



INTRODUCTION

In 2013, the Board of Directors and Staff of the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association engaged in a process to review and update the Association's Three Year Strategic Plan. The previous plan, which covered the period from 2010 through to 2013, provided a strong framework for ARPA to enhance its ability to be a leader for the recreation and parks sector in Alberta.

The review process was carried out over the entire 2013 calendar year and began with the Provincial Forum in January. The Forum brings together ARPA Board, Staff, Committee Chairs, members, partners and other stakeholders to discuss current trends and topics in recreation and parks and affiliated quality of life sectors. The process continued with several Board and Staff workshops to review the previous Plan, with consideration to the results of the Forum. Board and Staff revisited the Vision, Mission, Our Values and Guiding Beliefs, and Guiding Principles as well as the other elements that made up the 2010-2013 Strategic Plan.

The 2013-2016 Strategic Plan builds on the achievements of the past and many of the existing strategic directions have only seen small tweaks to bring them in line with some of today's trends, issues and opportunities. Other important policy documents including the Government of Alberta's Active Alberta Policy and Social Policy Framework as well as ARPA's own Foundations for Action paper were important guiding documents in the development of this Plan.

The previous Plan was structured to include both strategic and operational elements. The 2013-2016 Strategic Plan is a higher level Plan, focusing on strategic direction and developed by the Board that will now correspond to an operational plan (under separate cover), which identifies how staff will achieve the Plan's goals and objectives. It has also been developed to provide flexibility in order to meet dynamic economic and political demands that are becoming more and more evident in today's non-profit environment.

ARPA's commitment to supporting the recreation and parks sector and promoting the benefits of accessible, quality recreation and park services remains our top priority. ARPA will continue to use collaborative approaches that involve government and a wide range of partners and stakeholders who are committed to enhancing the quality of life for all Albertans through recreation and parks.

OUR VISION

An Alberta and the communities within, that embrace and proactively use recreation and parks as essential means for enhancing individual well-being, community vitality, economic sustainability, and stewardship of parks and open spaces.

OUR MISSION

ARPA exists to enhance the quality of life of all Albertans by collaborating with our members and partners to build healthy citizens, communities and environments.

OUR VALUES AND GUIDING BELIEFS

ARPA believes:

- that recreation and parks provide benefits that are essential to quality of life of all Albertan's;
- further, that the benefits of recreation and parks are:
 - enhanced population health and individual wellness;
 - building communities, social capital and foundations;
 - the beautification, conservation and preservation of parks and natural environments; and,
 - enhanced economic development.
- that play, physical activity, sport, arts and culture, and outdoor pursuits all fall under the umbrella of recreation;
- that "recreation and parks" include indoor facilities, community parks, public open spaces, specialty park areas, trails, natural areas and environmental reserves;
- that recreation and parks foster strong and vibrant communities;
- that a community development approach is foundational to achieving the full benefits of recreation and parks;
- that collaborating with our partners is essential to pursuing our mission and vision;
- that volunteers are crucial for the delivery of recreation and parks programs and services.

OUR OPERATING PRINCIPLES

ARPA's operating principles are derived from its mission, values and guiding beliefs and include:

- operating for charitable, educational and societal purposes through, and for, the promotion of recreation and parks services;
- meeting the needs of ARPA's members;
- providing leadership and advocacy for the recreation and parks sector at a local, provincial, and national level;
- pursuing open communications and networking with it's members and partners;
- creating partnerships with organizations with compatible and similar goals;
- being an innovative, sustainable, strategic, nimble, and entrepreneurial Association;
- being financially responsible, striving to exceed expectations, undertaking regular performance measurements, and embracing innovative technology.

Such operating principles will guide the actions of the ARPA Board of Directors and ARPA staff particularly with respect to the internal management and operations of the Association.

KEY RESULT AREAS AND OUTCOMES

1) SECTOR LEADERSHIP, POSITIONING AND ADVOCACY

- A) **Through the efforts of ARPA, the recreation and parks sector will be widely recognized and supported for its vital contribution to enhancing overall quality of life, individual wellness, and building healthy communities and environments.**
 - 1) To promote the comprehensive benefits associated with recreation and parks
 - 2) To build and market successful benchmark and quality assurance initiatives
 - 3) To connect research, policy and practice in the recreation and parks sector
- B) **ARPA will be recognized as a respected, forward thinking leader in recreation and parks development, advocacy and innovation and for being a primary voice for recreation and parks.**
 - 4) To promote increased funding and awareness for recreation and parks infrastructure
 - 5) To develop an effective issues management system

2) HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND ENGAGED COMMUNITIES

- C) **Alberta communities will be enriched, engaged and supported through ARPA programs, services and initiatives.**
 - 6) To incorporate community development principles and processes into ARPA programs and services.
 - 7) To collaboratively design, develop and manage initiatives for communities that help to build community capacity and civic engagement.
- D) **Albertans will have heightened awareness and appreciation of, and, experience the significant benefits associated with enhanced participation in recreation and parks activities.**
 - 8) To create opportunities for more active quality recreation and general wellness in Alberta communities in alignment with current active living and wellness objectives.
- E) **Enhanced social inclusion and reduced barriers for citizen participation in recreation and parks programs, services and facilities.**
 - 9) To create, support and manage programs, initiatives and partnerships that address recreation and parks inclusivity, accessibility and diversity to foster safe, active and healthy communities.

3) ADVANCED QUALITY OF LIFE SECTOR, COLLABORATIONS AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

- F) **The quality of life of Albertans will be enhanced through strategic and collaborative involvements of allied Quality of Life stakeholders.**
 - 10) To promote, engage and nurture strategic partnerships.
 - 11) To identify, engage and collaborate with allied Quality of Life sector stakeholders to enhance collective impact of the sector.

4) VALUED MEMBER SERVICES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

- G) **Association members will experience ongoing professional development, have increased capacity to network and be acknowledged for their standards and contributions to the quality of life sector.**
 - 12) To develop a career awareness and recruitment strategy to attract students and outside practitioners into our sector.
 - 13) To ensure ARPA's professional development is timely, relevant and applicable and of the highest quality (for all recreation practitioners).
 - 14) To advance the professional core competencies and develop professional development standards.
 - 15) To market and manage an ongoing awards, scholarships and recognition program.
- H) **The Association will garner increased memberships through quality member benefits, communications, programs and services.**
 - 16) To improve ARPA's brand and communications plan.
 - 17) To strengthen ARPA's marketing strategy through target markets and messaging.

5) ASSOCIATION EXCELLENCE, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY

- I) **ARPA will operate with a sound, effective and sustainable governance structure and within the conditions of the Alberta Societies Act and the Canadian Revenue Agency.**
 - 18) To strengthen and improve the effectiveness of ARPA's governance and organizational structure.
 - 19) To develop a comprehensive and diverse sustainability model including the development of social enterprise services, corporate relations and fund development.
- J) **ARPA will deliver maximum value to its members and stakeholders by being a well managed, entrepreneurial and fiscally sound association while remaining true to its mission, values and beliefs.**
 - 20) To attract, retain and remunerate diverse, qualified human resources for Association management and administration.
 - 21) To constantly review new technologies to ensure that the Association is not only relevant but operating as efficiently and effectively as possible.
 - 22) To develop an evaluation process to provide consistent measurement to all Association operations and initiatives.



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