

Wisconsin Park & Recreation Association **Three-Year Strategic Plan**

January 1, 2009 – December 31, 2011



submitted by the
**WPRA Strategic
Planning Committee**

to the Board of Directors
Wisconsin Park & Recreation Association

Introduction

This Strategic Plan for the Wisconsin Park & Association (WPRA) covers the three year period from January 1, 2009 to December, 2011 and is proposed for approval and adoption by the WPRA Board of Directors. This draft plan reflects WPRA's increasing sophistication and skill with strategic planning. It moves the plan 1) to a more strategic and less tactical focus and 2) is the next logical step in the organization's planning evolution. This document becomes the official plan for work slated to begin January 1, 2009 or later.

The document provides strategic direction for the work of WPRA as a single, unified Association, in order to advance the important work of member professionals and citizen advocates in public parks, recreation and conservation. It also supports pragmatic decision-making by the Board of Directors in a manner that reflects the best interests of the Association.

This strategic plan reinforces the core business lines of WPRA as a statewide association:

- Public Awareness
- Public Policy
- Citizen and Professional Development
- Development and Dissemination of the Body of Knowledge

WPRA has been involved in this method of strategic planning for fourteen years. This version of the strategic plan builds on that history of planning and moves the plan itself to a more strategic focus by elevating the goals to statements of outcomes to be achieved, rather than actions to be undertaken. For example, the prior plan's advocacy goal was to *"Pursue government relations and advocacy initiatives at the state level to support progressive policy-making and funding for public parks, recreation and conservation."* The rewritten advocacy goal states: *"WPRA's government relations and advocacy initiatives will result in policy-making and funding that benefits public parks, recreation and conservation."* The shift in wording is intended to bring focus on the outcome to be achieved, rather than the action to achieve it.

The 2006-2008 plan had five goals, as does this plan. All goals are equal in importance and priority. Three of the initial goals (Advocacy, Knowledge and Awareness) remain essentially the same, although rewritten as indicated above. Each goal is now referred to with a topical heading. The Governance and Revenue Generation goals from the prior plan have been collapsed into a single new Organizational Excellence goal. A new goal, Citizen/Professional Relationships was added.

In addition, objectives now reflect the overall movement desired to achieve the goal, rather than identifying a specific action or tactic. In this way, multiple solutions may be pursued to achieve the objective, rather than limiting the approach to a specific alternative identified in a more tactical statement. For example, rather than saying *“Develop a procedure among the state office, Legislative Committee and members to identify emerging legislative issues of potential interest”* the plan now says *“Increase the ability of the state office, Legislative Committee and members to identify and respond to legislative issues of statewide interest.”* Because there is more than one way to pursue such an objective, the revised plan now provides more flexibility to determine which way or ways will be most productive.

Existing priorities from the 2006 and 2007 thinking still remain within the plan, with one exception. The discussions of the Planning Committee focused in great depth on previous decisions to position WPRA as a citizen/professional ‘hybrid’ association. The Planning Committee acknowledged that WPRA’s primary products, programs and services have, in recent years, been geared significantly to professional members as opposed to a more balanced emphasis on both professional and citizen members. The Planning Committee believes that now is the time for WPRA to commit more fully to this hybrid concept and to determine once and for all its viability. Therefore, the plan calls for a new priority of Citizen/Professional Relationships.

In addition to updating the existing plan, the group also spent time considering and developing a statement of vision for WPRA – what it believes the organization should achieve or cause to happen within the next 10-30 years. It is from the perspective of that vision and reconfirmed mission, coupled with the expression of a set of values for WPRA and the perspectives added by the research that this draft plan was created.

2008 Strategic Planning – Board of Directors

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Definition of Terms

Several important terms are used throughout the Strategic Plan which do not have universally accepted definitions. The following definitions are provided so readers may better understand the intent of the authors during the preparation of this document.

Mission: a concise statement of the organization's reason for being, perpetual

Vision: 10-30 year goal describing what the organization seeks to become; an audacious goal that is tangible, energizing, and highly focused

Values: essential and enduring tenets of the association; a small set of timeless, guiding principles

Goals: timeless, unbounded statements describing the conditions or attributes to be attained

Objectives: measurable, attainable milestones to achieve on the way to accomplishing the goal

Tactics: annual actions and activities that determine how resources will be focused to maximize effectiveness and efficiency in achieving the objectives; describe ways to achieve objectives through program, organizational structure and operational initiatives

Core business lines: the primary areas in which the Association focuses its efforts and energy to achieve the mission

Wisconsin Park & Recreation Association Mission Statement

{Abbreviated Version}

To advance parks, recreation and environmental conservation efforts that enhance the quality of life for all people.

WPRA Core Values

- Quality and continuous progress in all our efforts
- A culture of enjoyment, fun and celebration
- Preservation of the heritage of public parks and recreation
- The importance of networking , collaboration and partnership
- Transparency in our decision-making
- Commitment to inclusion and diversity
- Service to members and stakeholders
- Stewardship of the natural environment and park and recreation infrastructure

WPRA's Vision

By 2020, every person in Wisconsin will have convenient access to safe and affordable public park and recreation opportunities.

Those public park and recreational opportunities will:

- Promote the importance and value of leisure
- Enhance community vitality
- Support human development
- Promote health and wellness
- Deliver quality urban experiences
- Garner legislative and financial support
- Foster environmental stewardship

WPRA will be a single, unified association advancing the important work of member professionals and citizen leaders in public parks, recreation and conservation.

WPRA's Goals

January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2011

Advocacy

WPRA's government relations and advocacy initiatives will result in policy-making and funding that benefits public parks, recreation and conservation.

Knowledge

WPRA's portfolio of high-quality, diversified and relevant education and training resources will provide the knowledge, competency and skill base that both park and recreation professionals and citizen advocates need to lead the field effectively.

Awareness

The general public, as well as public officials, legislators, and the media, will be more aware of the critical role played by public parks, recreation, and conservation efforts in encouraging healthy lifestyles, promoting environmental stewardship and supporting community livability.

Citizen/Professional Relationships

Working together, park and recreation professionals and citizen advocates will be champions for public park, recreation and conservation initiatives.

Organizational Excellence

WPRA will be an effectively governed, well managed, fiscally sound organization positioned to deliver maximum value to its members and stakeholders.

WPRA's Goals and Objectives January 1, 2009 – December 31, 2011

Advocacy

WPRA's government relations and advocacy initiatives will result in policy-making and funding that benefits public parks, recreation and conservation.

Objectives

1. Increase our capacity to implement a broad based advocacy program that affects funding, policy, and regulations at the national level to benefit public parks, recreation and conservation at the local and state levels.
2. Increase the ability of the state office, Legislative Committee and members to identify and respond to legislative issues of statewide interest.
3. Increase our internal capacity to conduct research and our external access to relevant data from similar state organizations, state affiliates, universities and other relevant sources.
4. Strengthen advocacy efforts through enhanced training and opportunities for greater involvement and participation in WPRA's advocacy agenda by both professional and citizen members.
5. Improve the association's ability to increase visibility and mobilize support around emerging issues and legislative initiatives of importance to WPRA.

Knowledge

WPRA's portfolio of high-quality, diversified and relevant education and training resources will provide the knowledge, competency and skill base that both park and recreation professionals and citizen advocates need to lead the field effectively.

Objectives

1. Regularly assess learning needs of citizen advocates and professionals and the most effective delivery methods for meeting those needs.
2. Develop and deliver relevant, affordable and accessible learning resources and opportunities for citizen advocates and professionals.
3. Adopt innovative methods to assemble and share data, leading practices, research and standards.
4. Regularly assess and promote standards-based credentialing programs for professionals, agencies, and colleges and universities.
5. Enhance the capability of the profession to attract, develop and retain a high quality, competent park and recreation workforce.

Awareness

The general public, as well as public officials, legislators, and the media, will be more aware of the critical role played by public parks, recreation, and conservation efforts in encouraging healthy lifestyles, promoting environmental stewardship and supporting community livability.

Objectives

1. Establish and expand programs with private and public sector organizations, both not for profit and for profit, whose interests complement those of WPRA.
2. Increase the organizational understanding and focus of the public awareness function.
3. Enhance WPRA's overall media relations effectiveness.
4. Expand the interest of the general public through creative programs and consistent messages.

Citizen/Professional Relationships

Working together, park and recreation professionals and citizen advocates will be champions for public park, recreation and conservation initiatives

Objectives

1. Increase citizen membership and engagement in WPRA.
2. Strengthen professional members' understanding of the value of engaging citizen board, commission members and volunteers in WPRA.
3. Increase the efforts of professional members to connect their citizen board, commission members and volunteers to WPRA.

Organizational Excellence

WPRA will be an effectively governed, well managed, fiscally sound organization positioned to deliver maximum value to its members and stakeholders.

Objectives

1. Continue to evolve and strengthen the structure, leadership and overall performance of the Association's governance.
2. Use innovative technology solutions to enhance business operations and member services.
3. Ensure continued fiscal stability and growth through revenue-focused business planning.
4. Increase the relevance and value of programs, products and services to better meet member needs.

Approved May 14, 2008