

colorado

PARKS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION



VISION PLAN





Colorado Parks and Recreation Association & CPRA Foundation

Vision Plan

FINAL

December 2012

Prepared by:



MIG, Inc.

815 SW 2nd Avenue, Suite 200

Portland, Oregon 97204

503.297.1005

www.migcom.com

PLANNING | DESIGN | COMMUNICATIONS | MANAGEMENT | TECHNOLOGY

815 SW 2ND AVENUE, SUITE 200 | PORTLAND, OREGON 97204-3022 | PHONE 503-297-1005 | FAX 503-297-3195 | www.migcom.com

Offices in Berkeley, Davis, Fullerton, Pasadena & San Diego, CA | Boulder, CO | Eugene, OR

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword

Acknowledgements

I. Introduction 1

Planning Process
Needs Assessment
Strategic Planning Framework
New Directions

II. CPRA Actions by Strategy Area 11

Education and Training
Promotion, Outreach, Marketing
Legislation and Advocacy
Support and Recognition
Financial Sustainability and Administration

III. CPRA Foundation Actions by Strategy Area 18

Scholarships and Services
Fund Development
Identity, Awareness and Involvement
Financial Sustainability and Administration

IV. Implementation Plan..... 21

Priority Strategies, Responsibilities, and Phasing
Implementation Priorities

Figures

Figure 1: Planning Process

Figure 2: Vision Plan Framework

Tables

Table 1: CPRA Implementation Priorities

Table 2: CPRA Foundation Implementation Priorities

FOREWORD

Our Future Defined

On behalf of the Colorado Parks and Recreation Association and the CPRA Foundation, we are excited to introduce the newly created CPRA and Foundation Vision Plan. The Association and Foundation both seek a common and improved path to support and promote the essential services and causes you all provide to the communities you work, play and live in, and this plan will help guide us through the process.

With input from our professional and commercial members, allied agencies, CPRA and Foundation Boards as well as the CPRA Staff, this Vision Plan was developed and clearly defines the direction and priorities both CPRA and the Foundation will follow to get us to our preferred future. It is intended to be a living document that will serve CPRA and the Foundation for the next five years.

NOW THE REAL WORK BEGINS!

It was with your input that this plan was developed and only with your energy that it will survive and thrive. We hope you will read this document, volunteer to assist in its implementation, and most importantly, take ownership in ensuring the Plan meets your needs as our profession, association and foundation evolve.

We appreciate your participation in this exciting plan and look forward to working with you on its implementation!

As always, contact any one of your CPRA or Foundation Board members with questions or comments, or contact the CPRA staff to offer your expertise.

Here's to our future!

Sincerely,
Cindy Keating, CPRA Past President
John Barnholt, CPRA Foundation Chair

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank our members, partners and allied professionals who provided input and contributed to the development of the *CPRA* and *CPRA Foundation Vision Plan*. Your insights and efforts will continue to lead the State of Colorado and the parks and recreation profession to a better future.

2011-12 CPRA Board

Cindy Keating, President
Cathy Metz, President-Elect
Rod Tarullo, Vice President
Susan Peterson, Secretary
Tim Anderson, Treasurer

2012-13 CPRA Board

Cathy Metz, President
Rod Tarullo, President-Elect
Carolyn Peters, Vice President
Mike Sexton, Secretary
Tim Anderson, Treasurer

2011-12 Section Representatives

Lauren Goodwin, Aquatics
Jill Nunes, CARA
Maripat Gallas, CASC
Dan Schwieder, CTRS
Amanda Peterson, Directors
Julie Holmgren, Facility Managers
Betsy Scally, Fitness
Dean Johnson, Parks
Clint Dudley, Small Communities
Rob Cook, Western Slope

2012-13 Section Representatives

Kristi Marosy, Aquatics
Jayna Lang, CARA
Maripat Gallas, CASC
Mark Snow, CTRS
Brett Rodewald, Directors
Chris Helm, Facility Managers
Susan Anderson, Fitness
Dean Johnson, Parks
Clint Dudley, Small Communities
Rob Cook, Western Slope

CPRA Foundation Board

John Barnholt, Chair
Eric Crennen, Treasurer
Amber Garrett, Secretary
Allison Boyd
Shannon Fern
Mary Colton
Janet Johnson
Patrick Hammer
Therese Thompson
Cathy Metz
Stephanie Stephens

CPRA Staff

Stephanie Stephens, Executive Director
Jo Burns, Administrative Coordinator
Ashley Perillo, Professional Development Program Manager

I. INTRODUCTION

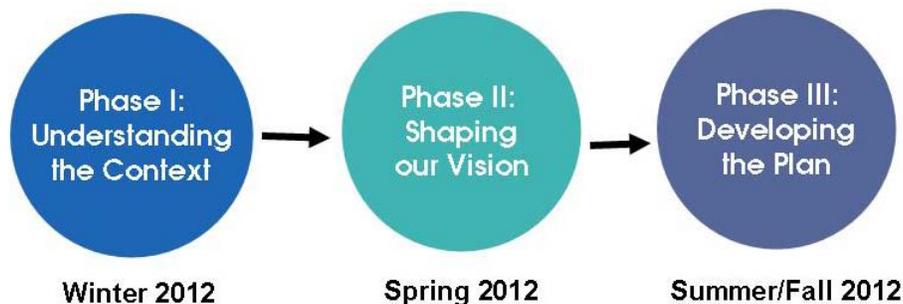
After 60 years of service, the Colorado Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) and the CPRA Foundation set out in January 2012 to redefine our organizations through the development of a *Vision Plan* – a five-year strategic plan that will serve as a roadmap to a new future. The *Vision Plan* will respond to trends in parks and recreation, helping us to create a preferred future through education, advocacy and financial support. As the State of Colorado emerges from the economic recession, the plan will enable our Association and Foundation to effectively meet the needs of professionals and future leaders and advance new goals for the parks and recreation profession.

CPRA and the CPRA Foundation are poised to renew our commitment to and investment in the parks and recreation profession across the State of Colorado. The *Vision Plan* recognizes the dynamic nature of our associations, including our history, our joint efforts to address current challenges and our aspirations for the future. The planning process included members, students, allied partners and professionals in identifying trends and issues affecting CPRA, the Foundation and our profession. A vision and set of strategic directions were developed based on this input to create a *Vision Plan* for the future.

A. Planning Process

The *Vision Plan* was developed through a three-phased planning process (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Planning Process



- *Phase I: Understanding the Context (Winter 2012):* In the first phase, trends and issues affecting CPRA and the CPRA Foundation were identified through outreach

activities that included an online questionnaire and member-facilitated discussion groups.

- *Phase II: Shaping our Vision for the Future (Spring 2012):* To effectively respond to the trends and issues identified in Phase I, Phase II included an interactive workshop with the CPRA and Foundation Boards to define a direction for future services. Board members discussed refinements for the organizations' core values, vision, and mission, and they proposed strategies and actions based on a shared understanding of CPRA and the Foundation's preferred future.
- *Phase III: Developing the Plan (Summer – Fall 2012):* The draft *Vision Plan* was developed and presented at the Annual Conference in October 2012 for review. It also was available on the CPRA website, so that all members and allied professional had an opportunity to be involved in its refinement. Based on the comments received and directions provided by the Boards, the *Vision Plan* was finalized to guide the activities of CPRA and the Foundation for the next five years.

B. Needs Assessment

This *Vision Plan* is a strategic plan that identifies the necessary actions to advance our shared vision. Currently, there are many challenges and changes in the field of parks and recreation that are influencing our services and vision for the future. It raises this question: As members of CPRA and the CPRA Foundation, do we have a common vision for the future, and if so, what steps should we take to achieve it?

To answer this question, CPRA commissioned a Needs Assessment study to identify the challenges faced by parks and recreation professionals and the tools, training and skills needed to successfully provide park and recreation services now and in the future. This information was used to define the roles that CPRA and the Foundation should play in meeting these needs. The needs assessment methodology included the following:

- *Vision Plan Questionnaire:* A total of 632 members and non-members responded to an online questionnaire, which was available for five weeks in February and March 2012. The questionnaire collected feedback on CPRA services, trends/issues, and competencies needed to successfully navigate the future of parks and recreation.
- *Vision Plan Discussion Groups:* Nearly 70 individuals participated in informal discussion groups hosted by CPRA members, who used Discussion Guides to collect feedback on the challenges and needs of the profession as well as the future roles of CPRA and the Foundation. Participants included University of Northern Colorado students, Western Slope professionals, CPRA/Foundation Board members, and section representatives.

Service Needs

The Needs Assessment identified the types of services that are most needed by CPRA members, as well as trends affecting the parks and recreation profession that could be addressed through trainings or programs. These needs were used to create the strategies and actions presented in Sections II and III of the *Vision Plan*. Findings are summarized on the next several pages.

CPRA Service Needs

Needs Assessment respondents would like to see an increased focus on the following CPRA services:

- *Expand Networking Opportunities.* Outreach findings suggest that the most valued services provided by CPRA are networking opportunities. Expanding and refining the way in which networking opportunities are delivered could help build a stronger sense of community among professionals, help members to solve critical issues through shared knowledge, and strengthen CPRA financially given a willingness of members to pay for these opportunities.
- *Enhance Marketing and Communications.* Park and recreation professionals want more assistance from CPRA in marketing and promoting parks and recreation to community members and decision-makers. Providing assistance in benchmarking service standards and outcomes would help CPRA and its members communicate the importance and benefits of parks and recreation more effectively. By enhancing efforts to promote parks and recreation statewide, CPRA could help agencies provide information and services that improve quality of life.
- *Improve Services throughout the State.* According to outreach participants, CPRA should increase training and networking opportunities outside the Denver Metro area. Increased training and networking events provided through online forums or offered in a variety of locations would allow CPRA to support a greater number of professionals. It would also help incorporate the knowledge and talent of professionals in geographic areas that are currently underserved.
- *Plan for Financial Sustainability.* Like other professional associations, CPRA is strongly dependent on revenues from public agencies. According the Vision Plan Questionnaire, most respondents noted that their professional memberships and trainings were paid for by their employers. To continue to develop a financially sustainable organization, CPRA must continue to provide the services that agencies and members value. These actions can build a strong organization for the future.

-
- *Recruit and Retain Young Professionals.* Talented young professionals are always needed in the field of parks and recreation. CPRA should continue to support young professionals in their professional development, training, and certification. It should also assist agencies in their efforts to attract quality professionals. This will ensure that talented professionals will lead the parks and recreation profession in the future.
 - *Focus on Quality Services.* In the past, CPRA has provided a wide range of services to appeal to a broad range of members. However, the greatest benefit and value may be derived from providing focused, high-quality and high-value services that are most desired by members. This could enhance member satisfaction and could help create a more sustainable organization.
 - *Enhance the Use of Technology.* Professionals view technology as a major opportunity for enhancing the delivery of CPRA services. Although CPRA has made several major investments in technology and web-based services, there are additional opportunities to expand the use of technology to improve training, networking and administration to improve efficiencies and reach more members in the future.

CPRA Foundation Service Needs

Needs Assessment respondents would like to see an increased focus on the following Foundation services:

- *Improve Awareness of Foundation Services.* Many CPRA members have not been involved in Foundation events or benefitted from Foundation services. There is a need to expand member awareness of what the Foundation does and the role it plays in supporting CPRA.
- *Expand Grant Opportunities.* Given current economic challenges, there is a question as to whether the Foundation could play a larger role in providing grants and funding for parks and recreation services. If Foundation fundraising could be increased, outreach participants noted several potential areas for fund distribution, such as professional development grants, scholarships for health/fitness, and funding support for agencies in planning, park and facility development and service implementation.

Parks and Recreation Profession Service Trends

The following trends and issues were noted by Needs Assessment respondents as areas where park and recreation professionals need skills, training and competencies to provide quality services:

-
- *Facilitate Health/Wellness.* Parks and recreation professionals across the nation are increasing efforts to support health and wellness. Fueled by trends such as an aging population, obesity crisis and increase in chronic disease, the contributions of parks and recreation professionals in health optimization, disease prevention, rehabilitation, and chronic disease management are recognized as critical elements of our work. CPRA and its members are playing a larger role in this area.
 - *Respond to Economic Challenges.* Since the beginning of the recession, parks and recreation agencies have experienced increased competition for funds and budget cuts. While loss of funding has created challenges in providing services that are both high quality and affordable, it has also created an opportunity for agencies to achieve greater efficiencies and to create new models of financial sustainability based on increased business savvy, partnerships and a greater reliance on revenue generation. Many agencies are seeking support and training in this transition.
 - *Position Parks and Recreation as Essential Services.* According to many respondents, parks and recreation programs have faced funding reductions because they are not valued as essential services. When supporting youth development, protecting natural areas, fostering a sense of community, and increasing health and fitness, professionals must simultaneously communicate that these are essential services that contribute to our quality of life. Many agencies are looking for the tools and communication strategies that will help them convey this message. Agencies also are looking to organizations such as CPRA to promote parks and recreation statewide through legislative and public policy advocacy.
 - *Build Partnerships.* Many parks and recreation agencies are soliciting the help of partners to move forward with new ideas and projects. By expanding partnerships with other departments, government agencies, nonprofit organizations and businesses, park and recreation agencies will be better able to realize their goals. This is true for CPRA as well. In addition, CPRA may be able to provide networking opportunities that help facilitate agency connections to potential partners.
 - *Address Changing Population Needs.* Parks and recreation professionals in Colorado are challenged with meeting the needs of more diverse populations, including older adults and seniors, returning veterans, changing families, people with disabilities, and diverse cultural groups, including Hispanic and Eastern European populations. CPRA should seek ways to diversify its membership to reflect the changing face of parks and recreation. It also should continue to provide diversity and accessibility training to help agencies improve services and remove barriers that limit participation for these groups.

-
- *Embrace Technology/Social Media.* With the growth of technology and social media, parks and recreation agencies must evaluate how best to utilize technology and information-sharing options to enhance operations and service delivery. Communications, program registration, distance education, technology-based programs, asset management and inspection, consumer feedback and many other functions can all be accomplished with the use of technology and social media. Effective response to these innovations will be essential for positioning parks and recreation agencies – including CPRA and the Foundation – for future success.
 - *Demonstrate Sustainable Practices.* Parks and recreation agencies are faced with a challenge to demonstrate their commitment to environmental ethics and efficient use of resources in multiple ways, including “greening” all agency operations and protecting and developing sustainable facilities and landscapes. These challenges present new opportunities to inform community members about environmental conservation while reducing agency impacts and resource use. CPRA can model sustainable services and provide information on sustainable practices.

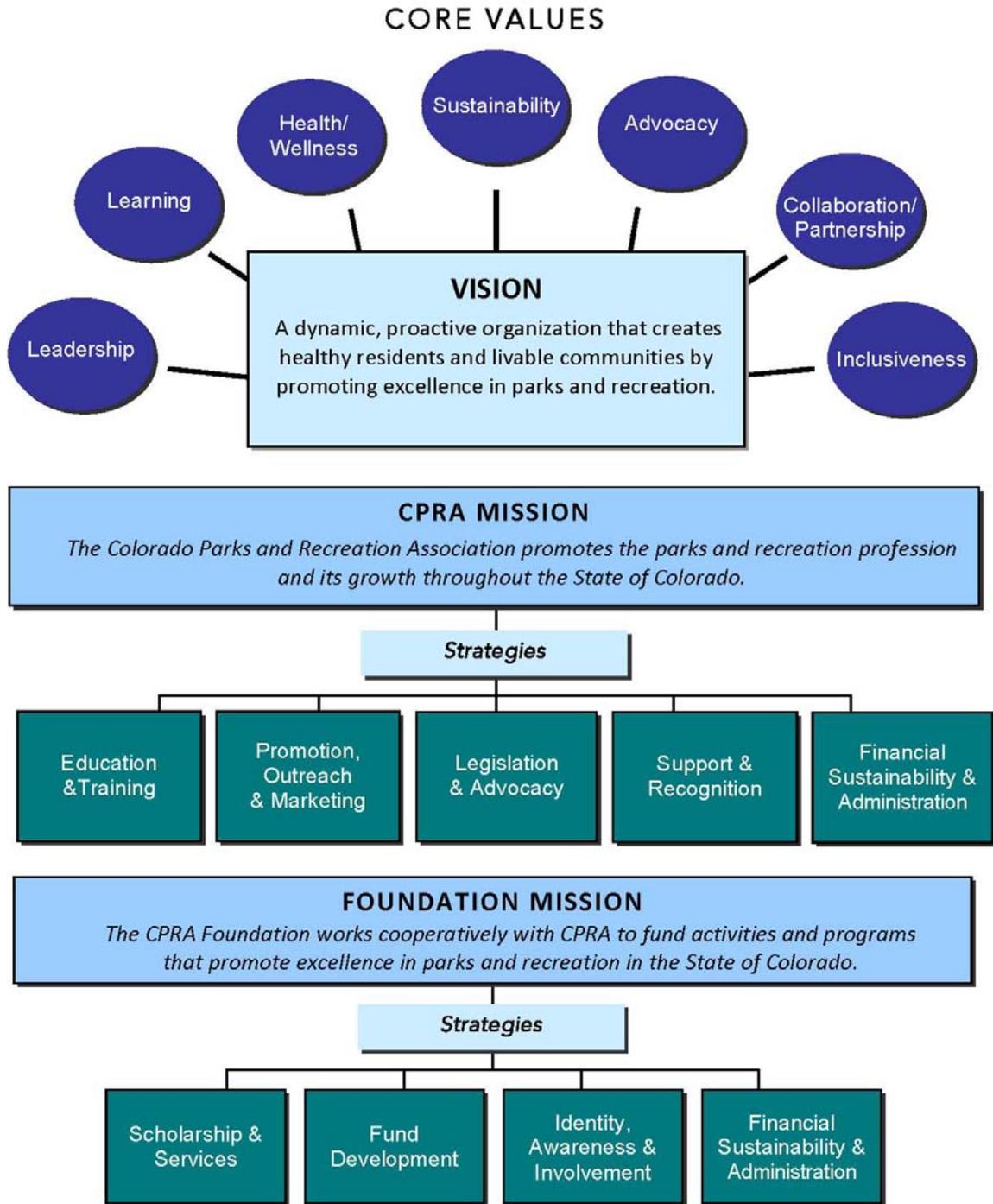
C. Strategic Planning Framework

CPRA and the Foundation recognized that a new framework for action was needed to address the trends, issues and service expectations identified in the Needs Assessment. At a strategic planning workshop held in May 2012, CPRA and Foundation Board members discussed and refined our core values, vision, mission and strategies to reflect these new directions and needs. The four elements were integrated into a *Vision Plan* framework to guide future actions (Figure 2). Each element is explained below:

- *Core values* are the shared beliefs and ideals that guide CPRA and Foundation services.
- The *vision* describes our preferred future.
- The *mission* describes the “business” of CPRA and the Foundation.
- A set of *strategies* for CPRA and for the Foundation detail how we will move forward to achieve our vision.

While CPRA and the Foundation share similar core values and a vision for the future, each has its own mission and strategies. These elements of the planning framework are described on the next several pages.

Figure 2: Vision Plan Framework



Core Values

CPRA and Foundation members believe that parks and recreation are essential services for all communities. Based on this belief, the following core values will guide CPRA and Foundation services:

- *Leadership:* We value our role as leaders in achieving excellence in park and recreation services and advocating for the parks and recreation profession.
- *Learning:* We value the training and educational opportunities that strengthen us professionally and provide the tools and knowledge needed to help us respond to changing trends and incorporate best practices in our work.
- *Health/Wellness:* We recognize the critical role that parks, facilities, recreation programs and natural areas play in helping Colorado residents live healthy, active lives.
- *Sustainability:* We are committed to the efficient and effective management of our organizations' assets and our State's park and recreation resources, positioning ourselves as good stewards to sustain these resources for future generations.
- *Advocacy:* We value quality park and recreation services and are committed to promoting the value of these services to professionals, decision-makers and the public.
- *Collaboration/Partnership:* We value opportunities to work together synergistically with fellow members, park and recreation providers, partners, and residents to achieve our vision for the future.
- *Inclusiveness:* We believe that we are stronger and more influential as a united group of park and recreation professionals from across the State, including members from different agencies and affiliations, diverse backgrounds and interests and different regions of Colorado.

Vision

CPRA and the CPRA Foundation together envision themselves as:

A dynamic, proactive organization that creates healthy residents and livable communities by promoting excellence in parks and recreation.

CPRA Mission

The mission of CPRA is:

The Colorado Parks and Recreation Association promotes the parks and recreation profession and its growth throughout the State of Colorado. We:

- *Educate*
- *Advocate*
- *Support*
- *Promote*
- *Recognize*

CPRA Strategies

To achieve its vision and mission, CPRA will implement specific actions in each of the following strategy areas:

- *Education and Training:* Provide high quality, diverse and accessible training opportunities to promote excellence in parks and recreation throughout the State.
- *Promotion, Outreach and Marketing:* Communicate the value of parks and recreation to professionals, decision-makers and the public.
- *Legislation and Advocacy:* Lead or partner in advocacy and legislative efforts that contribute to the quality and sustainability of parks and recreation services.
- *Support and Recognition:* Support, connect and recognize individual members and agencies to enhance excellence in parks and recreation.
- *Financial Sustainability and Administration:* Build a financially sustainable organization that promotes involvement, leadership, innovation and representation.

Foundation Mission

The mission of the CPRA Foundation is:

The CPRA Foundation works cooperatively with CPRA to fund activities and programs that promote excellence in parks and recreation in the State of Colorado.

Foundation Strategies

To achieve the vision and mission, the Foundation will implement specific actions in each of the following strategy areas:

- *Scholarships and Services*: Provide funding and support for the activities and programs of CPRA and parks and recreation agencies in the State of Colorado.
- *Fund Development*: Create a diverse development program to support funding objectives.
- *Identity, Awareness and Involvement*: Increase the understanding and awareness of the Foundation's purpose and the involvement of professionals.
- *Financial Sustainability and Administration*: Define the Foundation's organizational structure, funding objectives and management strategies.

D. New Directions

The sections that follow describe the actions that CPRA and the Foundation will take to achieve our vision for the next five years. However, Board and member feedback has suggested that the CPRA Foundation should develop its own strategic plan to assess its capacity and interest in expanding services—both in support of CPRA programs and potentially in support of other service areas. The development of a more detailed strategic plan for the Foundation will help determine future funding levels for CPRA programs, as well as the feasibility of providing grants to local agencies. In the meantime, this *Vision Plan* notes several options for future actions for CPRA and the Foundation, depending on the recommended direction of a detailed Foundation plan.

II. CPRA ACTIONS BY STRATEGY AREA

This section describes actions that CPRA will take to achieve its vision and mission in each of the strategy areas:

- Education and Training
- Promotion, Outreach and Marketing
- Legislation and Advocacy
- Support and Recognition
- Financial Sustainability and Administration

While many of these actions can be achieved over time with CPRA’s existing resources, others will depend on increased resources – especially the future contributions of the CPRA Foundation – to achieve their full realization. In most cases, actions that require additional resources will be scaled to accommodate available budget. For example, a branding and communications program that communicates the benefits and value of parks and recreation is a high priority for CPRA. With minimal additional funds, CPRA could incorporate this effort into its existing communications and utilize materials developed by other organizations, such as NRPA. With additional funding, CPRA could develop a custom campaign for CPRA and the State of Colorado.

A. Education and Training

Provide high quality, diverse and accessible training opportunities to promote excellence in parks and recreation throughout the State.

- A1. Revitalize CPRA’s education and training program, adding, eliminating or upgrading programs where necessary to maximize benefits received from each training session.
 - Reevaluate long-standing schools, such as the Facility Design School and Rocky Mountain Revenue Management School, to ensure that these programs are relevant and meet revenue and participation goals.
 - Identify and offer training opportunities to best support emerging roles for professionals, such as facilitator of health and wellness, and provide the competencies needed for the profession’s future success.
 - Provide additional training opportunities for park administrators, planners, designers and facility managers, in addition to the current training focus on diverse types of recreation programming.

-
- A2. Increase involvement in planning and conducting CPRA's educational programs.
 - Continue to involve section leaders in planning and conducting educational sessions.
 - Increase member involvement in selecting topics for educational sessions.
 - A3. Increase educational opportunities for park and recreation professionals outside the Denver area.
 - Develop a partnership strategy to involve related professionals in providing training opportunities throughout the State.
 - Organize training sessions in targeted geographical locations.
 - Utilize technology to provide distance training and networking opportunities.
 - Initiate sister-community or staff-swapping trainings as a way to share ideas among agencies in rural or outlying areas.
 - A4. Continue to utilize a variety of formats for education and training, such as:
 - Annual conference.
 - Annual student conference.
 - Section training and events.
 - Brown-bag lunches.
 - Professional schools, institutes and certification courses.
 - Technology-facilitated training, e.g., Skype, webinars.
 - Discussion sessions, including section- and job-oriented topics.
 - Sessions of varying length, including short opportunities.
 - Varied content levels, e.g., from introductory topics for young professionals to in-depth topics for executives and administrators.
 - A5. Secure partnerships for educational sessions, e.g., from the CPRA Foundation, other professional organizations, park and recreation agencies, other public and private agencies, and/or higher education.
 - A6. Increase informal training opportunities through mentoring/networking.
 - A7. Expand the networking value of trainings by increasing the interactive aspects of educational sessions.

B. Promotion, Outreach, Marketing

Communicate the value of parks and recreation to professionals, decision-makers and the public.

- B1. Develop a comprehensive branding and communications program to publicize the benefits and value of parks and recreation to Colorado professionals, decision-makers and residents.
 - Develop a communications toolkit (e.g., FAQ, talking points, PowerPoint, logo, sample social media posts, press releases and other materials) for agency and ambassador use.
 - Scale and phase-in the communications program as funding sources are identified and obtained.
 - Enlist allied partners in developing and publicizing the communications program to broaden its use.
 - Build support for the branding and communications program and its message among Colorado’s park and recreation agencies through training and communications, such as including announcements in CPRA Connections Webletter, in the Bylines Magazine, on the website, and through announcements at trainings and workshops.
 - Consider how tools such as PRORAGIS and other benchmarking data can be used effectively in this communications program.
 - Ensure that agencies are aware of similar existing materials, such as NRPA’s “America’s Backyard: Make Parks Yours” public awareness materials.
 - Determine whether CPRA should research, collect and/or maintain data to support the communications program.
- B2. Train park and recreation professionals as program ambassadors to communicate the benefits and value of parks and recreation to other agencies and the public.
- B3. Create a “State of Parks and Recreation in Colorado” report for the public.

C. Legislation and Advocacy

Lead or partner in advocacy and legislative efforts that contribute to the quality and sustainability of parks and recreation services.

- C1. Update CPRA’s policy platform.

-
- Develop an annual, multi-tiered plan for CPRA’s advocacy efforts, including funding issues impacting parks and recreation agencies.
 - Develop strategies to keep an active presence before the Colorado State Legislature and key state agencies.
 - Create a strategy to maintain regular communication with Colorado's congressional delegation.
 - Ensure that CPRA is involved with public, private and nonprofit organizations in strategy development on issues relevant to parks and recreation, such as the economy, tourism, health, the environment, community livability, etc.
 - Communicate the importance of CPRA’s advocacy work and the results achieved to members and other parks and recreation professionals.

C2. Expand and strengthen CPRA’s Advocacy Council.

- Create and fill a position of Council chair to provide additional leadership.
- Build partnerships to enhance CPRA’s advocacy efforts and involve partners in Council initiatives.
- Note Council members and their contact information on the CPRA website.
- Expand the work of CPRA’s Legislative Council to a year-round effort.
- Provide tools and training so that Council members can articulate CPRA’s policy platform.
- Strive to send a delegation to Washington, D.C., each year to lobby with other park leaders from around the nation during the NRPA Legislative Forum.

C3. Keep up with potential issues facing the parks and recreation profession by maintaining a professional lobbyist.

C4. Capitalize on national movements and advocacy efforts, and communicate the role of Colorado’s park and recreation agencies.

D. Support and Recognition

Support, connect and recognize individual members and agencies to enhance excellence in parks and recreation.

D1. Prioritize and provide diverse and creative networking opportunities, such as:

- In-person opportunities.

-
- Distance opportunities that utilize technology and social media, e.g., website forum.
 - Network nights.
 - Events for professional women.
 - Events or contests for section members.
 - Networking opportunities in conjunction with educational sessions.
 - Creative events, such as “Bring a Board Member to Work” day (or Council or Commission member).
 - Informal and fun opportunities.
 - Additional opportunities for information sharing.
- D2. Develop a comprehensive program to attract, mentor and retain young professionals.
- Recruit potential mentors and young professionals to participate in the pilot program.
 - Assess the needs and interests of young professionals, as well as the expertise of potential mentors to match mentors and young professionals.
 - Hold a kick-off session with all program participants to launch the program.
 - Encourage monthly meetings and biweekly phone sessions between mentors and young professionals or ongoing contacts as needed.
 - Hold several events for all participants annually, such as networking opportunities at the annual CPRA conference and student conference.
 - Evaluate the program with participant input and refine the mentoring program.
- D3. Continue to support and encourage member and agency certification to increase professionalism.
- D4. Refocus and revitalize CPRA Sections.
- Consider adding or eliminating Sections.
 - Identify strategies that allow sections to support and become more involved in CPRA initiatives.
- D5. Continue to identify opportunities to support Section Representatives and Executive Board Members.
- Consider free membership and/or training credits in exchange for services.
 - Relax the demands on Section Representatives by encouraging representative co-chairs, converting to bi-annual Section Board meetings, providing more staffing support, etc.

-
- Consider a paid staff position to support CPRA sections.
- D6. Continue to acknowledge and recognize leadership, diverse members, success, and innovation.
- Highlight member and agency accomplishments on the CPRA website, through the Connections webletter and in CPRA Bylines Magazine.
 - Recognize leadership, long-term members, new members, diverse members from different geographies and affiliations, volunteers and allied partners that support CPRA.
 - Recognize agencies through efforts such as the President's Tour.
 - Highlight commercial members and sponsors on the website.
 - Continue to periodically update the CPRA Awards Program with new categories and criteria, reflecting emerging initiatives and priorities for the organization.
 - In conjunction with the Foundation, recognize key people and organizations involved in fund development.

E. Financial Sustainability and Administration

Build a financially sustainable organization that promotes involvement, leadership, innovation and representation.

- E1. Communicate the value of CPRA to individuals and agencies to increase and sustain their financial support through membership.
- Develop an ongoing communications program that ties CPRA membership to measures of success, such as job success, success in building agency support, innovative programs, services or facilities, etc.
 - Highlight the value of CPRA through all existing channels of communication, such as the Connections Webletter, Bylines Magazine, CPRA website, membership renewal information and advertisements at trainings and workshops.
 - Consider utilizing new communications methods to further the program, such as member-to-member contacts and technology-based communications, such as Twitter.
- E2. Increase and sustain memberships by delivering what members and agencies want, need and will support financially through their membership fees, connecting CPRA membership to job success.

-
- Use annual questionnaires to identify member and agency priorities for training, networking, legislative priorities, etc., and to measure member and agency satisfaction.
 - Track member and agency satisfaction with services as reported on the annual questionnaire as an annual performance measure.
- E3. Clarify expectations regarding Sections' financial contributions to CPRA.
- E4. Diversify revenue sources that support CPRA.
- E5. Evaluate the cost effectiveness of utilizing in-house staff versus contract staff, interns and volunteers for needed services.
- Identify needed CPRA staff positions to support *Vision Plan* initiatives and in conjunction with the proposed CPRA Foundation strategic plan.
 - Consider the use of student interns to support CPRA staff, Executive Board Members and Section Representatives.
 - Define the role of volunteers within the organization, outlining the benefits of supporting the organization through leadership and other support positions.
- E6. Evaluate the value to members, cost effectiveness and sustainability of print versus online media.
- E7. Work with the CPRA Foundation to develop a fundraising plan to support future services and to identify responsibilities.
- E8. Continue to evaluate options for streamlining the organization of the CPRA Board.
- E9. Ensure that CPRA staff is empowered to implement innovations that help realize the direction set by the Board of Directors.
- E10. Develop and implement a technology plan to guide services provided and resources needed to support technology enhancement in the organization.
- Identify new and existing services that are supported by technology, such as training, communication and administrative functions.
 - Identify new resources that will be needed to implement the plan.
 - Identify a replacement schedule for existing resources, such as computers, printers, phone system, etc.
 - Prioritize needs.
 - Create cost estimates and a funding strategy for high priority needs.
- E11. Develop a sustainability plan for CPRA administration and services.

III. CPRA FOUNDATION ACTIONS BY STRATEGY AREA

This section describes actions in each strategy area that the CPRA Foundation will take to achieve the CPRA vision and the Foundation's mission. Strategy areas include:

- Scholarships and Services
- Fund Development
- Identify, Awareness and Involvement
- Financial Sustainability and Administration

The CPRA Foundation is at a crossroads. It must determine the focus of its services, its capacity to increase fund development, development goals and strategies, the role of volunteers and its relationship to CPRA. The outcomes of these decisions will impact the implementation of both CPRA and Foundation strategies, due to the degree of funding support provided to these organizations. Initial steps or options are described in the sections below.

A. Scholarships and Services

Provide funding and support for the activities and programs of CPRA and parks and recreation agencies in the State of Colorado.

- A1. As part of the Foundation's strategic planning effort, define the focus of the Foundation's funding programs and support activities, including internal programs serving CPRA and its members and/or external programs serving parks and recreation agencies and the public.
- A2. If consistent with recommendations in the new strategic plan, consider the following strategies to enhance grants and internal programs serving CPRA and its members:
 - Consider providing funding support for CPRA operations, particularly if new services are added.
 - Offer professional scholarships for CPRA memberships and educational programs.
 - Develop criteria to evaluate scholarships to ensure professionals in need or targeted (underrepresented) groups receive support.
 - Recruit agencies to publicize the scholarship program among their staff and to reinforce the program's benefits.

-
- Subsidize educational programs for targeted members or areas, following criteria established to identify targeted participants and levels of subsidies.
 - Subsidize the annual conference to reduce participant fees.
 - Fund CPRA technological innovations, such as videoconferencing tools and other advancements.
 - Provide funding for research/data collection that documents the outcomes of parks and recreation facilities, programs and practices. Consider involving interns, graduate students and universities in this program.
- A3. If consistent with recommendations in the new strategic plan, consider the following strategies for external grant programs and funding to support park and recreation agencies in Colorado:
- Expand current grant programs and publicize the grant programs to applicable groups.
 - Define applicable groups for grant eligibility, which may include park and recreation agencies and other nonprofit organizations.
 - Determine whether CPRA membership is required for these awards.
 - Consider grants and funding that support the following:
 - Capacity enhancement projects.
 - Funding for capital projects.
 - Comprehensive and master planning, especially for small communities.
 - Matching funds for grants provided by others.
 - Identify and support services that are not provided elsewhere, such as by Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO).
- A4. Consider providing grant-writing support to agencies as a revenue-generating service.
- A5. Consider broadening the chronic disease fitness program to serve other chronic diseases in addition to cancer.

B. Fund Development

Create a diverse development program to support funding objectives.

- B1. Expand the fund development program, securing desired donations through appropriate fundraising methods and tying donations to projects that will attract donors.
- Identify projects to be funded based on the Foundation's strategic plan.

-
- Identify appropriate donors and fundraising methods for each program. For example, major corporate donors may be more willing to support facility development grants but not training scholarships.
 - Set fundraising goals for each program.
 - Identify how fund development will be implemented and evaluated for each program.
- B2. If appropriate and consistent with the fund development program, consider the following strategies:
- Secure major corporate donors.
 - Provide large signature fundraising events.
 - Provide additional small-scale events, such as the annual golf tournament.
 - Continue to publicize opportunities to sponsor events and programs, advertise with CPRA, or fund new initiatives and services.
 - Develop a monthly donation plan.
 - Create a planned giving and endowment program.
 - Develop a large-scale campaign and call to action.
 - Produce events and volunteer opportunities that combine networking and fundraising.

C. Identity, Awareness, and Involvement

Increase the understanding and awareness of the Foundation's purpose and the involvement of professionals.

- C1. Develop a communications program that:
- Raises awareness about the Foundation's mission, vision and goals.
 - Raises awareness of the importance of contributing funds to the Foundation.
 - Promotes the scholarship program and increases applications for scholarships.
 - Increases awareness of Foundation grant opportunities.
 - Promotes the outcomes of Foundation programs.
- C2. Increase involvement in the Foundation through volunteerism as defined by the Foundation's strategic plan.

D. Financial Sustainability and Administration

Define the Foundation's organizational structure, funding objectives, and management strategies.

- D1. Create a CPRA Foundation Strategic Plan to clarify the Foundation's programs and services, internal and/or external fund recipients, development goals and strategies, role of volunteers and the relationship to CPRA.
 - Consider merging the Foundation and CPRA into a new 501(c)(3) organization with non-profit status.
- D2. Identify a leadership and staffing plan to support the programs and goals identified in the Strategic Plan. Consider the following:
 - Consider adding or reorganizing Foundation staff to strengthen operations and support the desired alignment with CPRA staff.
 - Consider revising the nine-member director system for the Foundation Board.
- D3. Update the Foundation by-laws to reflect the new organizational structure of the Foundation.
- D4. Improve the Foundation's accounting practices.
- D5. Provide opportunities for the Foundation's Board to learn more about CPRA.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The implementation plan identifies priority actions for CPRA and the Foundation. These include actions to be initiated and/or completed in the first three years. For each priority action, the timeline for implementation is identified along with the strategy category. The group or groups with lead responsibilities for implementation also are identified, such as CPRA staff, the Executive Board, the CPRA Board, Sections, the Advocacy Council and the Foundation Board.

A. Priority Strategies, Responsibilities, and Phasing

Based on feedback from the CPRA and Foundation Boards, as well as comments obtained through outreach activities, the actions noted in Sections II and III of this document were prioritized on a three-tiered scale. High priority actions should be initiated in the first year. Moderate priority actions will be implemented in 2-3 years. These actions, along with their timeline for implementation, are noted in the Implementation Priorities tables that follow.

The remaining actions identified in the Vision Plan are lower priority, and should be implemented in 4+ years as funding and organizational capacity allows.

This plan is intended to be flexible to allow CPRA and the Foundation to take advantage of funding, staffing, and Board and member support as available to move forward on priorities—especially once the role of the Foundation is clarified. While some actions can be achieved using current resources, the organizations must also identify additional resources and seize opportunities as they arise to realize this plan.

The Vision Plan is designed to provide guidance for the next five years. Over time, conditions will invariably change based on evolving interests, trends, issues and opportunities. As a result, the implementation plan should be updated annually as part of CPRA’s and the Foundation’s annual work plan. The strategic plan should be updated every five years.

B. Implementation Priorities

On the following pages, Tables 1 and 2 present the implementation priorities for CPRA and the Foundation.

Table 1: CPRA Implementation Priorities

STRATEGY CATEGORY	STRATEGY ID	CPRA ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
YEAR 1: HIGH PRIORITY			
Education & Training	A3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase educational opportunities for park and recreation professionals outside the Denver area. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop a partnership strategy to involve related professionals in providing training opportunities throughout the State. ○ Organize training sessions in targeted geographical locations. ○ Utilize technology to provide distance training and networking opportunities. ○ Initiate sister-community or staff-swapping trainings as a way to share ideas among agencies in rural or outlying areas. 	CPRA Staff & Sections
Promotion, Outreach & Marketing	B1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a comprehensive branding and communications program to publicize the benefits and value of parks and recreation to Colorado professionals, decision-makers and residents. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop a communications toolkit (e.g., FAQ, talking points, PowerPoint, logo, sample social media posts, press releases and other materials) for agency and ambassador use. ○ Scale and phase-in the communications program as funding sources are identified and obtained. ○ Enlist allied partners in developing and publicizing the communications program to broaden its use. ○ Build support for the branding and communications program and its message among Colorado’s park and recreation agencies through training and communications, such as including announcements in CPRA Connections Webletter, in the Bylines Magazine, on the website, and through announcements at trainings and workshops. ○ Consider how other tools, such as PRORGIS and other benchmarking data, can be used effectively in this communications program. ○ Ensure that agencies are aware of similar existing materials, such as NRPA’s “America’s Backyard: Make Parks Yours” public awareness materials. ○ Determine whether CPRA should research, collect and/or maintain data to support the communications program. 	Executive Board
Support & Recognition	D1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize and provide diverse and creative networking opportunities, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In-person opportunities. ○ Distance opportunities that utilize technology and social media, e.g., website forum. ○ Network nights. ○ Events for professional women. ○ Events or contests for section members. ○ Networking opportunities in conjunction with educational sessions. ○ Creative events, such as “Bring a Board Member to Work” day (or Council or Commission member). ○ Informal and fun opportunities. ○ Additional opportunities for information sharing. 	CPRA Staff, CPRA Board, & Sections

Table 1: CPRA Implementation Priorities

STRATEGY CATEGORY	STRATEGY ID	CPRA ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
YEAR 1: HIGH PRIORITY			
Financial Sustainability & Administration	E1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate the value of CPRA to individuals and agencies to increase and sustain their financial support through membership. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop an ongoing communications program that ties CPRA membership to measures of success, such as job success, success in building agency support, innovative programs, services or facilities, etc. ○ Highlight the value of CPRA through all existing channels of communication, such as the Connections Webletter, the Bylines Magazine, the CPRA website, membership renewal information and advertisements at trainings and workshops. ○ Consider utilizing new communications methods to further the program, such as member-to-member contacts and technology-based communications, such as Twitter. 	CPRA Staff & Executive Board
Financial Sustainability & Administration	E2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase and sustain memberships by delivering what members and agencies want, need and will support financially through their membership fees, connecting CPRA membership to job success. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use annual questionnaires to identify member and agency priorities for training, networking, legislative priorities, etc., and to measure member and agency satisfaction. ○ Track member and agency satisfaction with services as reported on the annual questionnaire as an annual performance measure. 	CPRA Staff & Executive Board
Financial Sustainability & Administration	E3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify expectations regarding Sections' financial contributions to CPRA. 	CPRA Staff & Executive Board
Financial Sustainability & Administration	E8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to evaluate options for streamlining the organization of the CPRA Board. 	CPRA Staff & Executive Board

Table 1: CPRA Implementation Priorities

STRATEGY CATEGORY	STRATEGY ID	CPRA ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
YEARS 2-3: MODERATE PRIORITY			
Education & Training	A1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revitalize CPRA’s education and training program, adding, eliminating or upgrading programs where necessary to maximize benefits received from each training session. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reevaluate long-standing schools, such as the Facility Design School and Rocky Mountain Revenue Management School, to ensure that these programs are relevant and meet revenue and participation goals. ○ Identify and offer training opportunities to best support emerging roles for professionals, such as facilitator of health and wellness, and provide the competencies needed for the profession’s future success. ○ Provide additional training opportunities for park administrators, planners, designers and facility managers, in addition to the current training focus on diverse types of recreation programming. 	CPRA Board
Legislation & Advocacy	C1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update CPRA’s policy platform. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop an annual, multi-tiered plan for CPRA’s advocacy efforts, including funding issues impacting parks and recreation agencies. ○ Develop strategies to keep an active presence before the Colorado State Legislature and key state agencies. ○ Create a strategy to maintain regular communication with Colorado's congressional delegation. ○ Ensure that CPRA is involved with public, private and nonprofit organizations in strategy development on issues relevant to parks and recreation, such as the economy, tourism, health, the environment, community livability, etc. ○ Communicate the importance of CPRA’s advocacy work and the results achieved to members and other parks and recreation professionals. 	Advocacy Council
Support & Recognition	D2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a comprehensive program to attract, mentor and retain young professionals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recruit potential mentors and young professionals to participate in the pilot program. ○ Assess the needs and interests of young professionals, as well as the expertise of potential mentors to match mentors and young professionals. ○ Hold a kick-off session with all program participants to launch the program. ○ Encourage monthly meetings and biweekly phone sessions between mentors and young professionals or ongoing contacts as needed. ○ Hold several events for all participants annually, such as networking opportunities at the annual CPRA conference and student conference. ○ Evaluate the program with participant input and refine the mentoring program. 	CPRA Board

Table 1: CPRA Implementation Priorities

STRATEGY CATEGORY	STRATEGY ID	CPRA ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
YEARS 2-3: MODERATE PRIORITY			
Financial Sustainability & Administration	E10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a technology plan to guide services provided and resources needed to support technology enhancement in the organization. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify new and existing services that are supported by technology, such as training, communication and administrative functions. ○ Identify new resources that will be needed to implement the plan. ○ Identify a replacement schedule for existing resources, such as computers, printers, phone system, etc. ○ Prioritize needs. ○ Create cost estimates and a funding strategy for high priority needs. 	CPRA Staff

Table 2: CPRA Foundation Implementation Priorities

STRATEGY CATEGORY	STRATEGY ID	FOUNDATION ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
YEAR 1: HIGH PRIORITY			
Scholarships & Services	A1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the Foundation’s strategic planning effort, define the focus of the Foundation’s funding programs and support activities, including internal programs serving CPRA and its members and/or external programs serving parks and recreation agencies and the public. 	Foundation Board
Financial Sustainability & Administration	D1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a CPRA Foundation Strategic Plan to clarify the Foundation’s programs and services, internal and/or external fund recipients, development goals and strategies, role of volunteers and relationship to CPRA. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consider merging the Foundation and CPRA into a new 501(c)(3) organization with non-profit status. 	CPRA Staff & Foundation Board
Financial Sustainability & Administration	D2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a leadership and staffing plan to support the programs and goals identified in the Strategic Plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consider adding or reorganizing Foundation staff to strengthen operations and support the desired alignment with CPRA staff. ○ Consider revising the nine-member director system for the Foundation Board. 	CPRA Staff & Foundation Board
YEARS 2-3: MODERATE PRIORITY			
Fund Development	B1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the fund development program, securing desired donations through appropriate fundraising methods and tying donations to projects that will attract donors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify projects to be funded based on the Foundation’s strategic plan. ○ Identify appropriate donors and fundraising methods for each program. For example, major corporate donors may be more willing to support facility development grants but not training scholarships. ○ Set fundraising goals for each program. ○ Identify how fund development will be implemented and evaluated for each program. 	Foundation Board
Identity, Awareness & Involvement	C1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a communications program that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Raises awareness about the Foundation’s mission, vision and goals. ○ Raises awareness of the importance of contributing funds to the Foundation. ○ Promotes the scholarship program and increases applications for scholarships. ○ Increases awareness of Foundation grant opportunities. ○ Promotes the outcomes of Foundation programs. 	Foundation Board