Essential Livability for Oregonians
ORPA STRATEGIC PLAN
2016-2020

Prepared by
NXT Consulting Group LLC
Portland | Bend, Oregon

for
Oregon Recreation & Park Association

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October 2016
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the last 12 months, the Oregon Recreation and Park Association (ORPA) has worked through its Board, Executive Committee and Strategic Planning Committee, as well as the input of its large and diverse membership – the agencies, special districts and park service providers of Oregon – to develop a comprehensive strategic plan for the organization. NXT Consulting Group of Portland and Bend was retained to lead this project.

The strategic planning process began in November 2015 by reaching out to a broad cross-section of ORPA membership through an in-depth survey, launched at its Annual Conference. This was followed by a visioning session with ORPA Board members in December, resulting in two long-range vision statements: one addressing the future of parks and recreation in Oregon and the other addressing ORPA’s role as a leading steward of parks and recreation in the state.

After a short pause, the strategic planning process resumed early in 2016. At that time, plan input was broadened and deepened through a series of one-on-one interviews with key ORPA stakeholders, as well as a targeted “environmental scan” – an assessment of the organization’s internal and external operating environments. This research resulted in a robust framework for the emerging plan comprised of four key areas of focus:

• Who We Are – Organizational Development
• How We Serve – Member Services
• Telling Our Story – Park & Recreation Advocacy
• Planning Ahead – Research & Long-Range Planning

The culmination of these activities resulted in identification of a number of strategic issues – key questions concerning the future of parks and recreation in Oregon and ORPA’s role as a leading steward of parks and recreation in the state. These questions outlined a broad slate of major challenges – and opportunities – to inform development of the plan.

At its Strategic Planning Summit in June 2016, and through reviews by its Board and Executive Committee, ORPA prioritized these issues for the next five years, and decided on a series of strategies to address them. The final plan contains 8 strategies – two per focus area. Each strategy also includes three initiatives for its implementation. Initiatives are ordered by the degree of ambitiousness – from "Do Better," to "Lean In," to "Game Changer." Some initiatives are also flagged as "Key Moves" that will help leverage and advance the entire organization.

Always, the bigger question for ORPA in its planning process has been: “How might ORPA serve its membership well?” Given its all-volunteer board, small staff and modest budget, there is a limit to what its list of top priorities can be. That is the purpose of a strategic plan: to identify the most timely, relevant and appropriate strategies possible that can be delivered most effectively by the organization, moving it in the direction of its long-term vision.

The resulting **ORPA Strategic Plan 2016-2020** is a flexible compendium of directives that will guide the organization over the next five years in achieving a vision of parks and recreation that fosters "essential livability" for all Oregonians – with ORPA as a key steward of that vision.
PART I:
THE PROCESS
ORPA STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

In September 2015, Oregon Recreation and Park Association (ORPA) retained NXT Consulting Group LLC of Oregon (say “next”) to advise in the development of its first-ever strategic plan, intended to provide a clear strategic direction for the organization and, by extension, the statewide membership its serves, including park and recreation providers, policy makers, vendors, and, ultimately, park and recreation users themselves.

A Two-Phase Planning Process. Initially, this planning project was designed as a single, integrated process with a series of activities including stakeholder interviews, a scan of trends and issues affecting ORPA’s internal and external operating environments (“environmental scan”), a survey of the ORPA membership, a number of membership focus groups, articulation of a long-term vision, and development of an organizational strategic plan, with strategies, initiatives, timelines and milestones.

Shortly after its launch, the proposed process was revised to reflect changes in ORPA management and leadership, and, specifically, to accelerate delivery of a membership survey in time to be launched at its annual conference in November.

The revised planning process was designed to take place in two separate phases, with a decision to proceed with the second phase contingent upon results of Phase One and the determinations of ORPA’s Board of Directors. As planned with the original design, NXT continued to work closely with ORPA’s Board President, Strategic Planning Committee and Executive Committee to deliver the process.

Phase One: October 2015-February 2016

Online Membership Survey. To launch Phase One of the revised process, NXT Consulting developed a comprehensive survey of ORPA membership in November, conducted by the Center for Survey Research at Indiana University and delivered online.

More than 200 members and stakeholders responded to the survey instrument with a 75% completion rate, producing a wealth of information on member needs, perceptions, and aspirations. Below is a summary of survey respondents, key themes and most predominant responses. A detail survey summary, included methodology and selected results, is included in the appendices to this report. (See Appendix A, page 35.)

• Who Responded to the Survey? Survey respondents reflected a balance of professional career categories: 36.2% Parks Administration; 24.7% Program Coordinators; 16.7% Park Services; 10.3% Park Planning & Development; with the remaining 11% comprised of Commercial Service Providers, Governance, Citizen Advisory Committees, and Other in that order.

• What Types of Organizations Were Represented? Respondents were dominated by two general categories of park and recreation providers: Municipal/City/County Organizations 47.4%; Special Districts 38.2%; State Organizations 4.0%; and Other 4.6%.
• **Top Three Internal Challenges Today?**  Respondents identified three major internal challenges *currently* facing their profession: (1) Lack of Skilled Staff/Training; (2) Embracing Change/Organizational Culture; (3) Deferred Maintenance.

• **Top Three Internal Challenges in 5 Years?**  Respondents identified three major internal challenges facing their profession *in five years’ time* (the planning horizon of the proposed strategic plan): (1) Lack of Skilled Staff/Training; (2) Deferred Maintenance; (3) Materials and Services Budget.

• **Top Three External Challenges Today?**  Respondents identified three major external challenges *currently* facing their profession: (1) Diminished Funding/Competition for Dollars; (2) Changing User Demographics; and (3) Community Partnerships/Volunteers.

• **Top Three External Challenges in 5 Years?**  Respondents identified three major external challenges facing their profession *in five years’ time*: (1) Diminished Funding/More with Less; (2) Changing User Demographics; and (3) Uncertain Economy.

• **Satisfaction with Current ORPA Programs & Services?**  Respondents indicated relatively high to moderate levels of satisfaction with ORPA programs and services, when combining “somewhat satisfied” and “very satisfied” rating categories: Administration, 59.7%; Maintenance & Construction, 52.5%; Natural Resources, 48.3%; Outdoor Recreation, 43.9%; SPRINT 42.5%; SOAR, 40.2%; Recreation Sports, 37.2%; and Aquatics, 34.7%.

• **Satisfaction with Specific ORPA Functions?**  Respondents indicated very high levels of satisfaction with ORPA special functions, when combining “somewhat satisfied” and “very satisfied” rating categories: Conference, 82.3%; Workshops, 81.3%; Leadership/Professional Development, 71.6%; Legislative Advocacy, 70.2%; and Awards and Recognition, 69.5%.

Board Visioning Retreat. Next, utilizing major survey findings as context, NXT conducted a visioning workshop at the December meeting of the ORPA Board, including the Executive and Strategic Planning committees. Working in large and small group formats, members brainstormed responses to four sets of questions, including key trends, strategic issues, priorities, and a long-term vision for the organization. The result was not one but two vision statements intended to guide the organization’s strategic planning and decision-making, reflecting its unique role and activities in the state:

• A **vision for the future of parks and recreation** as a whole in Oregon, emphasizing the essential role they play in community livability; and

• A **vision for ORPA as an organization**, emphasizing its role as a leading steward and advocate of parks and recreation in the state.

ORPA’s dual visions were subsequently refined and adopted by the ORPA Strategic Planning Committee as working vision statements intended to inform its ongoing strategic planning, as well as to guide current organizational activities and decision-making. (See “ORPA Vision Statements,” page 18.)
Phase Two: March-November 2016

Early in 2016, ORPA’s Board formally approved continuing with its strategic planning initiative, building on the survey and visioning work of Phase One. The NXT Consulting team met with the ORPA Executive and Strategic Planning committees to review its findings to date, finalize a framework for the emerging ORPA strategic plan, and launch detailed planning.

Planning Framework and Focus Areas. Based upon the comprehensive membership survey, Board visioning workshop outcomes, ORPA stakeholder interviews and on-going refinements, NXT Consulting proposed the following planning framework, including four “focus areas” and sample subtopics, to anchor this next phase of this strategic planning process and provide the framework for the emerging strategic plan:

Focus Area 1: Who We Are – Organizational Development
- Organizational Mission
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Administration & Staffing
- P&R Leadership
- Finance
- Funding

Focus Area 2: How We Serve – Member Services
- Professional Development
- Member Accessibility
- Succession Planning
- Education & Training
- Use of Technology
- ORPA Conference
- Communications

Focus Area 3: Telling Our Story – Park & Recreation Advocacy
- Partnerships
- Public Outreach
- Communications
- Legislative Lobbying
- Marketing and Branding

Focus Area 4: Planning Ahead – Research & Long-Range Planning
- Environmental Scanning
- Long Range Planning
- NRPA Annual Conference
- Research and Development
Stakeholder Interviews. Beginning in Spring 2016, NXT Consulting conducted 13 extended telephone stakeholder interviews with a broad cross-section of Park and Recreation leaders from all regions of the state. These professionals represented rural, urban and municipal park and recreation agencies, special districts, and state parks. We spoke with recreation specialists, planning directors, park services, the past ORPA president, three Executive Directors, the outgoing ORPA Executive Director, and the current legislative lobbyist.

Stakeholders interviewed included the following:

- **M.G. Devereux**, Deputy Director, Oregon State Parks and Recreation Department
- **Michelle Healey**, Director of Planning and Park Services, Bend Park & Recreation District
- **Don Horton**, Executive Director, Bend Park & Recreation District
- **Ed Hodney**, Director, City of Albany Parks & Recreation Administration
- **Bob Keefer**, Superintendent, Willamalane Park & Recreation District
- **Robin Laughlin**, Capital Projects Manager, Portland Parks & Recreation
- **Matt Mercer**, Director of Recreation, Bend Park & Recreation District
- **Stephanie Redman**, past Executive Director, ORPA
- **Cindy Robert**, Legislative Advocate, ORPA
- **Brian Sjothun**, Director, City of Medford Parks & Recreation
- **Stu Spence**, Executive Director, City of La Grande Parks & Recreation; Board Chair, ORPA
- **Sasha Sulia**, Superintendent of Park Operations, Bend Park & Recreation District; Board Member, ORPA
- **Jan Taylor**, Director of Communications (retired), Bend Park & Recreation District; past Board Chair, ORPA

During these interviews, we asked the following questions to deepen our understanding of survey results and help identify strategic issues that would drive development of the ORPA Strategic Plan:

- **What are the biggest external trends impacting parks and recreation today?**
- **What are the internal issues challenging most park and recreation agencies?**
- **What should be the role of ORPA for its membership going forward?**
- **What would be the ‘one big move’ for ORPA?**
- **Looking out 10 years, where do you want to see ORPA?**
- **How will we know if ORPA is delivering on its promises? (Measures for success?)**
- **What are three words that best define ORPA?**

“We have never passed a municipal bond measure; educating our community on the benefits of parks and recreation is so important.”
– Brian Sjothun, City of Medford Parks and Recreation

“I want to see ORPA lead as a partner with education and health care professionals, to be a collaborative, regional leader.”
– Robin Laughlin, Portland Parks and Recreation

“Branding tools could be shared; advertising resources could be pooled, etc.”
– BPRD interviews
Results of the stakeholder interviews produced an additional tier of insightful information for the planning process from the perspective of leading park and recreation advocates. It also helped NXT further define the slate of strategic issues that appears later in this report. A summary of key stakeholder comments, organized by focus area and the above questions, is included in Appendix B of this report on page 52.

**Environmental Scanning.** NXT Consulting also conducted a targeted "environmental scan" to supplement the perceptions developed through the membership survey and stakeholder interviews. This included examination of global/national and Oregon-specific trends that will likely influence the future of parks and recreation in the state. While many of the state and local trends reflect larger-scale global trends, some are quite unique to the state, including Oregon’s transitioning economy, continued economic challenges facing rural Oregon communities, and predictions of a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake occurring sometime in the next 50 years. (In planning terminology, the latter would be classified as an “emerging issue” of high probability, as opposed to a forecasted “trend.”) (See “The Context of Change,” page 9.)

**Strategic Planning Summit.** The next step in Phase Two of the process was a Strategic Planning "Summit," held in June 2016. Convening in Bend, this event built on the stakeholder interviews, widening the circle to include 45 invited participants from all regions of the state, all sizes and types of park and recreation districts and agencies, ORPA’s legislative advocate, and adjunct service providers.

The purpose was to more deeply engage parks and recreation leaders in the process, taking into consideration emerging trends and identified strategic issues (See “The Context of Change,” page 9 and "Strategic Issues," page 14), and developing priority strategies that would respond to identified issues. As a result of this day-long session, eight top-priority strategies, two per focus area, were identified for further development.

**Plan Development.** Throughout the rest of the summer and into fall, the consulting team worked with the ORPA Executive Committee, Strategic Planning Committee, and new ORPA Executive Director, to develop and refine three specific initiatives for each strategy. Initiatives were ordered in relation to their degree of ambitiousness – from "Do Better," to "Lean In," to
"Game Changer." Certain initiatives were also identified as "Key Moves," i.e., initiatives that would help leverage the entire plan and advance the organization toward its vision.

Board Review and Input. In September, the ORPA Board met to review and provide input on the draft strategic plan. Utilizing their suggestions for changes and refinements, a final draft plan was prepared for approval and adoption by the ORPA Executive Committee.

Presentation to 2016 Conference. The final strategic plan will be presented to ORPA's membership at its Annual Conference in November 2016.
THE CONTEXT OF CHANGE

Today’s public sector organizations face a virtual tsunami of change and Oregon Recreation and Park Association (ORPA) is no exception. With its service-oriented mission, limited resources, and growing member demand for programs, services and information – not to mention a continually changing and evolving operational environment – ORPA finds itself at the center of this phenomenon, both as a subject and agent of change.

Increasingly, ORPA and the members it serves must cope with trends and issues that are transforming their customers, their facilities and services, and even the natural environment that, in part, they steward. In order to adapt and thrive, ORPA must anticipate change and plan ahead – and do so in a way that is both aspirational and strategic.

ORPA’s strategic plan will play a pivotal role in serving the long-term interest of the organization, its key stakeholders, and its many members. Its visions will serve as long-term aspirations for parks and recreation in Oregon and the organization itself, looking out 15 years (2030), while its Strategic Plan will serve as a roadmap to organizational growth and change, with a near-term horizon of 3-5 years.

Global and National Trends of Change

The phenomenon of change begins at the global level and is shaped by a number of long-term, large-scale driving forces that are sweeping across the planet. Such “megatrends” affect all nations and reach down to impact us at the state and local levels. Most futurists agree that while many of these trends cannot be abated, they certainly can be anticipated and responded to more proactively.

Below is a list of some of the most dominant global and national trends that will affect the world, the future of Oregon, and by extension the future of parks and recreation in this state.

• **World population** will expand by 1 billion people in the next 15 years, with increased migrations, growing diversity, and ongoing aging of the population in more developed nations.
• The **global economy** is rapidly restructuring, unevenly distributed and highly volatile, with increasing disparity between the world’s rich and poor – both among and within nations.
• The **planetary environment** is under greater stresses, driven by continued natural resource depletion, pollution of air and water, climate change, and decreasing biodiversity.
• **Scientific and technological advances** will continue apace in more developed nations, including basic science, technological innovation, and integration of information technology into modern life.
• **Large cities** will be the focus of global population growth and new development, with increased urbanization, larger metropolitan areas, more expensive housing and urban services, and aging infrastructure.
• **Medical science and technologies** are advancing while at the same time health care will be increasingly costly and unevenly accessible.
• **Generations are shifting and cultures are diversifying**, with increasing social and cultural diversity and changing norms, values and mores, especially among younger populations.
State and Local Trends of Change in Oregon

While all global trends reach down to have impacts at the state and local level in the U.S., some trends will be more pronounced than others. Below are some of the trends projected to affect Oregon that are also likely to have significant impacts on parks and recreation in the state.

- **Oregon’s population is growing.** In recent years, Oregon has had the highest levels of immigration from other states in the entire country – in absolute numbers. Statewide population is forecast to increase by more than a million people, from 3.97 million in 2014 to 4.8 million in 2030, with most population growth occurring in urban centers.

- **Oregon’s older population is also expanding.** Oregon’s percentage of citizens over 65 is growing faster than the nation as a whole (an 18% increase from 2010 to 2014 compared to 14% for the nation as a whole). This increase is happening across the state and in every county, and is due in part to an influx of retirees as well as aging of the Boomer generation.

- **Oregon’s population continues to diversify.** Oregon will continue to become more racially and culturally diverse, especially with a burgeoning Hispanic population dominating younger population cohorts. The number of Oregon Latinos grew five times faster than the rest of the population between 2000 and 2014, increasing by 65%.

- **Oregon’s economy is rebounding and continues to diversify.** Oregon’s economy is recovering from the Great Recession and continues its long-term trend away from resource-based and extractive industries to a more diversified economy, most prominently high technology and knowledge-based industries. Portland, Salem, and Bend area economies are growing faster than ever, while “second-tier” metro areas are finally turning a corner. Rural areas of the state continue to lag behind economically, however the State of Oregon is working to link natural resources with innovation to create new jobs in rural areas.

- **Oregonians continue to earn less than the nation with a few exceptions.** Average income in Oregon continues to rank below the national average. In 2014 median household income in Oregon was slightly above $51,000, or more than $2,500 less than the nation as a whole. The state’s highest household incomes are in the Portland metro area and Deschutes County. All other counties fall below the national average. At the same time, Oregon currently has one of the highest minimum wages in the nation ($9.25 average statewide) and this amount is planned to increase over time.

- **Oregon’s cities are growing and developing, but with stronger controls over growth than other states.** Growth and urban development are continuing apace in Oregon, with continued growth in all of the state’s major cities. More Oregonians will live in its cities in the future. The State’s comprehensive land-use planning system will continue to provide Oregon cities a greater degree of control over growth and development, and potentially higher levels of community livability than in other states. This, in turn, may have the effect of attracting more migration to the state, including its smaller cities and towns.

- **Homelessness is becoming a bigger issue in Oregon.** In the foreseeable future, people affected by homelessness in Oregon are projected to grow in their numbers, placing increased stresses on local social services, housing, drug treatment and mental health
providers, and the criminal justice system. Parks and recreational facilities will also continue to be impacted by homelessness, and will by necessity be involved in public and community efforts to find lasting, effective, positive solutions.

- **Oregonians are stepping up preparations for climate change and natural disaster.** The State faces the dual threats of climate change (including increasing average temperatures, drought, and the threat of large-scale wildfires), as well as the predicted Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and tsunami.

  There is a predicted 37% chance of a Cascadia quake occurring between now and 2065. Impacts will be severe on the Oregon coast and very serious in the western valleys. After the quake, Central Oregon will become the center of Federal emergency response (FEMA) and temporary state government, as well as the state’s transportation and distribution hub for at least two to three years. Large population migrations to Central Oregon and other cities east of the Cascades are expected in the short term. State and local governments are increasingly focused on building greater resiliency in local communities. Some cities are also developing climate action strategies (e.g., Portland, Corvallis, Bend). The State of Oregon also has a State Resiliency Plan and localities are working to increase public awareness and readiness. Local parks and recreational providers will be expected to be part of disaster response and recovery efforts.

- **Use of public lands, natural areas, and parks and recreational amenities continues to increase in Oregon.** With its exceptional natural attractions and large amount of public lands, Oregon will continue to focus on both economic utilization and public enjoyment of its natural amenities, although most likely in increasingly different ways than the last century. More and more people will be using national, state, regional and local parks and recreational facilities, with potentially significant impacts on wear and tear, maintenance, traffic and parking, crime and vandalism, and related impacts. People will also continue to recreate in new and more diverse ways, influenced in part by an older and more ethnically diverse population, as well as by more affluent recreationalists and outdoor enthusiasts. Recreational amenities will continue to attract more visitors and new residents to the state.

### Impacts on Parks and Recreation Providers

Building on the above trends and changes, the number and types of challenges facing Oregon Recreation and Park Association and its member organization are many. Here is a sampling of strategic issues proposed by NXT Consulting at the onset of the strategic planning process:

- **Responding to Demographic Change.** *How do we develop parks and recreational programs that are responsive to changing demographics and cultural values – such as the growing numbers of older and minority park users?*

- **Promoting Community Livability.** *How do we deepen the role of park districts as partners in the delivery of healthy, livable communities – including the conservation and stewardship of inter-urban green space?*
• **Ensuring Transparency and Accountability.** *How do we build transparency and accountability into the delivery of park services – being mindful of the competition for scarce public funds with other public agencies and institutions with legitimate funding needs?*

• **Securing State Funding and Other Sources of Support.** *How do we promote and sustain legislative support for state funding to match and augment local park and recreation budgets?*

• **Developing Best Business Practices.** *How do we develop business approaches that adapt best practice private sector tools to park services, such as branding, marketing, and strategies for revenue generation?*

• **Cultivating Leadership and Vision.** *How do we transcend traditional roles to become bolder organizations that lead with vision and collaborate across public, private and civic sector boundaries?*

• **Promoting Organizational Sustainability.** *How do we create sustainable organizations with effective succession planning that attract and retain top-flight professionals who are well educated and trained?*

As ORPA moves into the next chapter of its evolution, a targeted strategic planning process offers the opportunity to explore these and more specific strategic issues, and to respond to them in an intentional, proactive way.

**Additional Perspectives on Trends and Opportunities from NRPA**

The National Recreation and Park Association lists the following five trends and opportunities for local park and recreation agencies. Following each, there is a question that links these trends to major themes surfaced in ORPA’s member survey responses and stakeholder interviews. These were considered as potential initiatives for ORPA on behalf of Oregon membership.

• **Low energy costs offer opportunities to invest in long-term energy upgrades.**
  *How might ORPA membership capitalize on energy and renewable resource rebates to meet demands on aging facilities and respond to inadequate programming space?*

• **Parks will be part of community response to climate change and disaster.**
  *How might ORPA membership develop as community leaders, initiating local responses to climate change and a potential earthquake/tsunami disaster?*

• **Targeted data analysis supports the contribution of parks to thriving local economies and community livability.**
  *Should ORPA co-sponsor a state-level assessment and report on the essential contributions of parks to a livable, connected Oregon?*

• **Park and recreation programs offer opportunities to respond to expanded cultural diversity and social inequity.**
  *How does ORPA view ‘social equity’ within its member communities and support development of best practices and responses?
• Consider a surcharge on fitness facilities and/or sugar beverages to fund park and recreation programs reducing health disparity.

  How might ORPA lead a conversation concerning the scope of ‘health and wellness’, ranging from obesity to homelessness to the latest trends in fitness and recreation programs?

Specific Opportunities for Local Park and Recreation Providers

According to the NRPA, local parks and recreation agencies are also uniquely positioned to make significant contributions in the following areas, and do so by providing critical front-line services and resources.

• Conservation. Parks are critical in the role of preserving natural resources that have real economic benefits for communities. Park agencies are leaders, often the only voice in communities for protecting open space, connecting children to nature, and providing education and programming that helps communities engage in conservation practices.

• Health and Wellness. Parks and programming lead the nation in improving the overall health and wellness of communities. Park agencies are essential partners in combating some of the most complicated and expensive challenges our country faces – poor nutrition, hunger, obesity and physical inactivity.

• Social Equity. Universal access to public parks and recreation are a right, not just a privilege. Every day park professionals are working hard to ensure that all members of our communities have access to the resources and programming we offer. Few, if any other agencies, can make this claim.

ORPA STRATEGIC ISSUES

Based on the Oregon Park and Recreation online member survey, stakeholder interviews, and environmental scanning, as well as additional input on trends and issues generated at the Board visioning workshop, NXT Consulting developed a slate of strategic issues facing ORPA and the future of parks and recreation in Oregon. These strategic issues are posed below as a series of draft questions that are intended to stimulate ideas for strategies to be included in the final ORPA Strategic Plan.

The strategic issues are organized by the four focus areas of the ORPA Strategic Plan: Organizational Development, Member Services, Park & Recreation Advocacy, and Research & Long-Range Planning. Each set of questions is framed by an initial statement assessing where ORPA is today and some of its key attributes for that focus area (“Where are we today?”). This is followed by the list of draft strategic issues (“What issues do we face?”). In addition, each focus area highlights a “What if…” question, focused on a possible “game changing” opportunity for ORPA – and designed to stimulate the strategy development process.

These lists of draft strategic issues were reviewed, vetted, amended and responded to by participants at the ORPA Strategic Planning Summit in June 2016.

Focus Area 1: Who We Are – Organizational Development

Where are we today? ORPA finds itself at a promising moment to build from a strong foundation of leadership and an energized board of visionary P&R professionals. We are valued and respected by our membership and have established a solid financial foundation. There is strong consensus that our organization delivers good value for membership and is a trusted partner, convener and connector. We’re in a good place to grow our services, without abandoning our important mission and core values.

What Issues do we face?
1. How will ORPA hire a visionary executive director with strong administrative and development skills?
2. How will ORPA attract and keep an effective and visionary board of directors, representative of its diverse membership?
3. How will ORPA generate alternative funding to meet its mission/vision?
4. How will ORPA develop a clearly defined organizational structure?
5. How will ORPA increase membership, paying attention to these sections:
   - Administrative
   - Aquatics
   - Maintenance and Construction (MACS)
   - Natural Resources (NRS)
   - Outdoor Recreation (ORS)
   - Recreational Sports (RSS)
   - Section for Programming Interests (SPRINT)
   - Section for Older Adult Resources (SOAR)
6. What would a ’Western ORPA’ – a regional network of professionals and programs look like? Is it needed?
7. What opportunities does the addition of Oregon Parks Association to ORPA represent?
Focus Area 2: How We Serve – Member Services

Where are we today? ORPA’s flagship annual conference is well regarded and offers an important platform for professional development, statewide networking and coordination around shared initiatives. Across the state, finding and keeping trained talent is a high priority and a challenge for ORPA membership. Without a regional university degree program, professional development and resource sharing are important aspects of ORPA’s mission.

What issues do we face?
1. How will ORPA produce an outstanding slate of ORPA ‘Leadership Academy’ trainings, professional workshops, networking opportunities, community building programs and a first-rate annual conference?
2. How will ORPA develop a new formula for more frequent, high-quality trainings for membership? (see also Organizational Development / funding)
3. How does ORPA define and develop its role as advocate and voice for parks and services throughout Oregon? (see also Park & Recreation / outreach strategy)
4. How will ORPA assist in the development of succession planning strategies for member organizations, as well as attracting and retaining Park & Recreation talent?
5. How will ORPA promote community partnerships and develop strategic resource efficiencies?

Focus Area 3: Telling Our Story – Park & Recreation Advocacy

Where are we today? Advocacy is an important role for ORPA-- in Salem, and with the public. Developing impactful messages around the economic, social and health benefits of parks and recreation is a significant leadership opportunity for ORPA. Fortunately, there is much research being directed to measuring this on a national level. But what about a regional look? Shaping and leading a robust legislative agenda that is multi-faceted and timely is another strategic priority for the organization. Finally, developing a connected, mutually supportive community of P&R professionals is at the heart of the ORPA mission—“we’re better together”!

What issues do we face?
1. How will ORPA be proactive in Salem, working closely with our lobbyist, advocating for issues directly impacting our membership?
2. Should ORPA be a leader in the urgent, statewide conversation concerning homelessness and affordable housing?
3. Partnerships are essential. How will ORPA support its member agencies to collaborate effectively?
4. How will ORPA utilize social media effectively to connect with our membership and with the communities we serve?
5. Should ORPA lead the conversation regarding the impacts of PERS and minimum wage increases to agency budgets? What is our message?

**WHAT IF...** ORPA initiated a state-level assessment, documenting the contribution of parks, programming and recreation to the economies and livability of the communities we serve?

**Planning Ahead – Research & Long-Range Planning**

**Where are we today?** ORPA serves an essential role as the aggregator of trends, global impacts and opportunities for the Oregon Park & Recreation industry. The organization exists at a strategic nexus with a diverse membership of municipal, rural and urban agencies. ORPA is the ‘keeper of the vision’ for all Oregon parks and programs.

**What issues do we face?**
1. How will changing demographics and issues of social equity impact park experiences and program participation? What role does ORPA play?
2. How can ORPA assist members to innovate with creative programming that competes favorably with private providers?
3. Should ORPA address perceptions of resource waste and mistrust of government agencies?
4. How can ORPA assist members to balance recreation demand and tourism impacts with environmental stewardship?
5. How can ORPA support socio-economic diversity of age, gender, and inclusion in the business of park and recreation?

**WHAT IF...** ORPA, working closely with NRPA and other agencies, offered regular ‘global trends analysis’ informing planning and programming locally with a broader context for our important work?
PART II:
THE PLAN
Based on input received from ORPA membership, the following vision statements were developed and affirmed by the ORPA Board of Directors to guide the development of its 2016-2020 Strategic Plan. As long-term aspirations, these visions – one for the future of parks and recreation in Oregon and one for ORPA itself – are focused on a longer-term planning horizon (15 years – or the year 2030) than the plan itself (5 years). As such, it will likely take more than one iteration of strategic planning by ORPA to achieve them.

A Vision for Parks and Recreation – ‘Essential Livability for All Oregonians’

“WE ENVISION parks and recreational opportunities that add value to the lives of all Oregonians, promoting active lifestyles, engaged citizens, and livable communities.

In our vision, Oregon’s parks and recreational facilities are essential services – the “common spaces” where we recreate and renew, connect and thrive, and steward the future of our communities. They are safe, well funded and maintained, inclusive and accessible, technologically enabled, environmentally sound, and responsive to a changing society and world. They are also equitably distributed across every community and throughout the state. We envision opportunities for Oregonians and our visitors to recreate and enjoy our state’s abundant open spaces and diverse natural resources. Our parks and recreation facilities are the fabric of whole communities – where we interact with nature, learn about and protect our environment, and engage in healthful activities that broaden our horizons and improve our lives.”

A Vision for ORPA – ‘Stewarding the Future of Parks and Recreation in Oregon’

“WE ENVISION Oregon Recreation and Park Association (ORPA) as the statewide organization stewarding the future of parks and recreation in Oregon.

In our vision, ORPA is the strategic leader and public voice of the collective organizations, partners, and people who operate, maintain, and serve Oregon’s state, regional and local parks and recreation facilities and programs. ORPA supports its members through regular communication, information on important trends, issues and technologies, assistance for grant and funding initiatives, advocacy with state and local policy makers – as well as programs and training that help them stay ahead of change and succeed in their missions. ORPA is recognized nationally for its creative messaging, strong advocacy and innovative programming. Its vision, stature, and leadership ensure that parks and recreation in Oregon remain essential services and legacies for the future, contributing to the lives of all Oregonians and our visitors.”
ORPA Strategic Plan (2016-2020)

The ORPA Strategic Plan (2016-2020) is intended to inform and guide the key deliberations, decisions and actions undertaken by the Board, staff members, committees and other partners of the Oregon Recreation and Park Association between now and the year 2020, helping to achieve the organization’s vision for parks and recreation in Oregon and itself as a leading steward of same.

Plan Focus Areas

This plan is organized into four primary areas of focus:

- **Who We Are** – Organizational Development
- **How We Serve** – Member Services
- **Telling Our Story** – Park & Recreation Advocacy
- **Planning Ahead** – Research & Long-Range Planning

For each of these focus areas there are a number of identified topic areas (shown below) upon which the plan is focused. At the same time, other related topics are addressed in the plan.

Plan Organization

For each focus area of the ORPA Strategic Plan, there are two priority strategies that are targeted for achievement over the next five years – eight strategies in total. These strategies were developed in response to key strategic issues identified by the planning process.
Additionally, for each strategy, there are three identified initiatives – or activities slated for implementation over the lifetime of the plan. These initiatives are ordered according to the degree of effort it may take the organization to achieve their implementation:

- **"Do Better"** is considered a logical next step in achieving a strategy – an initiative that is well within the organization's capacity to implement within the timeframe of the plan.

- **"Lean In"** is considered taking a strategy to the next level of effort – an initiative that will require greater time, energy and/or resources to implement.

- **"Game Changer"** is considered an all-out effort – an initiative that will require significant time, energy and/or resources to implement, but which will have a major impact.

Some of these initiatives have also been flagged as "Key Moves" that will help leverage the entire plan in achieving ORPA's visions.

In total, there are 24 potential initiatives for implementation by ORPA over the next five years. Will this may seem daunting, the plan is built in a way that the organization can pick and choose initiatives as the time, resources and intention for their implementation comes into focus.

In addition, a number of strategies that were not rated as top priority are included in a "Thinking Forward" section for each focus area. These may be picked up and "actioned" by the organization as it sees timely and appropriate.

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### ORPA ORGANIZATIONAL VISION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLAN FOCUS AREAS</th>
<th>PRIORITY STRATEGIES &amp; INITIATIVES</th>
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<td>HOW WE SERVE</td>
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<td>ORGANIZATIONAL</td>
<td>MEMBER SERVICES</td>
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<td>DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>TELLING OUR STORY</td>
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<td>PARK &amp; RECREATION ADVOCACY</td>
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<td>Do Better</td>
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<th>THINKING FORWARD</th>
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Key to Plan Initiatives

Each initiative called out in the ORPA Strategic Plan is organized as follows:

- The initiative is identified by its respective focus area, corresponding strategy, designated level of effort, and specific title;

- Text that describes the effort in greater detail;

- Placeholders for identification of the following implementation information as the initiative is rolled out: Lead (the person or group charged with implementation; Timeline (the timeframe within which implementation of the initiative will occur); Funding Resources (the budget, types of resources, sources of funding) that will be required for implementation; and Milestone (an indicator of the successful completion of the initiative). Note that this information is intended to be developed by the organization as it commits to undertake the implementation of a given initiative.

The graphic below provides an example of a completed initiative (except for implementation information).
FOCUS AREA 1: WHO WE ARE  
(Organizational Development)

BACKGROUND

What kinds of topics does this focus area address?

• Organizational Mission
• Roles and Responsibilities
• Administration & Staffing
• Parks & Recreation Leadership
• Finance

Where we are today? ORPA finds itself at a promising moment to build from a strong foundation of leadership and an energized board of visionary P&R professionals. We are valued and respected by our membership and have established a solid financial foundation. There is strong consensus that our organization delivers good value for membership and is a trusted partner, convener and connector. We’re in a good place to grow our services, and reach out to new members while enriching our important mission and core values. At the same time, the organization faces distinct challenges, including limited staffing, budgetary limitations, and reliance on volunteers for its Board and numerous working committees. In order to improve its efficacy, ORPA must focus on its ongoing organization building and development.

What is the key question to be answered? What specific organizational elements can we reinforce or build upon in order to sustain and grow ORPA?

What are the priority strategic issues to be addressed? At the ORPA Strategic Planning Summit participants identified the following priority strategic issues for Organizational Development:

  Strategic Issue 1: How will ORPA generate alternative funding to meet its mission/vision?
  Strategic Issue 2: How will ORPA increase membership?

Addressing these priority issues resulted in the strategies (and corresponding actions) that follow.

Other strategic issues identified by the process may suggest additional strategies and initiatives:

• How will ORPA attract and keep an effective and visionary board of directors, representative of its diverse membership?
• How will ORPA develop a clearly defined organizational structure?
  o What would a ‘Western ORPA’ – a regional network of professionals and programs look like? Is it needed?
  o What opportunities does the addition of Oregon Parks Association to ORPA represent?
### PRIORITY STRATEGIES & INITIATIVES FOR ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**OD Strategy 1. Alternative Sources of Funding.** Expand and develop alternative sources of funding that increase ORPA's revenues and improve the organization's capacity to serve its membership, fulfill its mission, and achieve its vision.

#### OD 1.1 ("Do Better"): Explore New Funding Avenues

Build on the current membership structure and program fees by refining existing and exploring new funding sources, such as grants and sponsorships.

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#### OD 1.2 ("Lean In"): Comprehensive Financial Model

Develop a longer-term comprehensive and sustainable financial model.

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#### OD 1.3 ("Game Changer"): Western Regional Recreation & Park Conference

As a new product, develop, promote and host a periodic Western Regional Recreation & Park conference in the western United States to address park & recreation challenges, opportunities and best practices unique to this region.

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**OD Strategy 2. Expanded Membership.** Expand ORPA's membership base, including new organizations from across the public and private sectors, as well as individual parks and recreation agency employees and affiliated professional organizations and individuals.

#### OD 2.1 ("Do Better"): Improved Membership Value

Develop a “business case” or study that clarifies and demonstrates ORPA's relevance, value and benefit for current and prospective new members. Use this value proposition to market and promote the organization.

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#### OD 2.2 ("Lean In"): Targeted New Memberships

Conduct a third-party membership study to analyze member satisfaction and retention, and identify targeted opportunities for increasing ORPA membership with new member recruitment initiatives.

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### OD 2.3 ("Game Changer"): Partner Programs

Based on business case study outcomes, develop a partnership program targeting secondary product and service providers as well as new park and recreation professionals.

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**Thinking Forward: Other Potential Strategies for Organizational Development**

**OD 3: Board Development**

Cultivate and develop an outstanding and committed Board of Directors over time that is representative of ORPA's diverse membership, local communities, and the state as a whole.

**OD 4: Organizational Structure**

Develop and implement a clearly defined organizational structure for ORPA consistent with its vision, strategic plan and key goals for the next five years.
FOCUS AREA 2: HOW WE SERVE (Member Services)

BACKGROUND

What kinds of topics does this focus area address?

- Professional Development
- Member Accessibility
- Succession Planning
- Education & Training
- Use of Technology
- ORPA Conference
- Communications

Where we are today? ORPA currently delivers high value when it comes to programs and services for its membership. ORPA’s flagship annual conference is well regarded, offering an important platform for professional development, statewide networking, and coordination around shared initiatives. This highly anticipated signature event is supplemented by ORPA’s ongoing trainings and educational programs for its membership. Nevertheless, park and recreation providers face an expanding slate of challenges that can benefit from ORPA’s strong voice and leadership. For example, finding and keeping trained talent is a high priority and a challenge for ORPA membership across the state. Without a regional university degree program, professional development and resource sharing continue to be an important aspect of ORPA’s mission. Such issues demand that ORPA continue to build and refine a range of programs and services that keep its membership ahead of the race.

What is the key question to be answered? *What are the most impactful existing and new programs for ORPA to develop and offer to its membership?*

What are the priority strategic issues to be addressed? At the ORPA Strategic Planning Summit participants identified the following priority strategic issues for Member Services:

**Strategic Issue 1:** How will ORPA produce an outstanding slate of ORPA ‘Leadership Academy’ trainings, professional workshops, networking opportunities, community building programs, and a first-rate annual conference?

**Strategic Issue 2:** How will ORPA promote community partnerships and develop strategic resource efficiencies?

Addressing these priority issues resulted in the strategies (and corresponding initiatives) that follow.

Other strategic issues identified by the process may suggest additional strategies and initiatives:

- *How will ORPA develop a new formula for more frequent, high-quality trainings for membership?* (see also Organizational Development / funding)
- *How does ORPA define and develop its role as advocate and voice for parks and services throughout Oregon?* (see also Park & Recreation / outreach strategy)
- *How will ORPA assist in the development of succession planning strategies for member organizations, as well as attracting and retaining Park & Recreation talent?*
PRIORITY STRATEGIES & INITIATIVES FOR MEMBER SERVICES

**MS Strategy 1. Outstanding Member Services.** Develop an outstanding slate of ORPA member services, including Leadership Academy trainings, professional workshops, networking opportunities, community building programs, and a first-rate annual conference.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>MS 1.1</strong> (&quot;Do Better&quot;): Annual Conference</th>
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<tr>
<td>Improve ORPA’s Annual Conference by strengthening and expanding professional development workshops, opportunities for member networking, and community building.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>MS 1.2</strong> (&quot;Lean In&quot;): Leadership Academy</th>
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<tr>
<td>Create ORPA Leadership Academy, offering a regular calendar of workshops and educational programs, expanded member networking and community building opportunities, and peer-to-peer advisory groups.</td>
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<th><strong>MS 1.3</strong> (&quot;Game Changer&quot;): Education Coordinator Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>Create a new position funded by expanded program and training fees that is sustainable over time, resulting in more effective delivery of a comprehensive slate of tangible member services.</td>
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**MS Strategy 2. Community Partnerships.** Promote local and community partnerships focused on developing strategic resource efficiencies and expanded reach for park and recreation service providers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>MS 2.1</strong> (&quot;Do Better&quot;): ORPA Partnership Database</th>
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<tr>
<td>Research and develop a comprehensive &quot;Partnership Database&quot; based on the ORPA website to identify areas for member recruitment, promoting regional and local partnerships and developing expanded resource efficiencies.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>MS 2.2</strong> (&quot;Lean In&quot;): Mentoring Opportunities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Create and coordinate regional mentoring and training opportunities within and outside of park and recreation agencies promoting best practices and community resource sharing.</td>
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<td><strong>Lead</strong>: (TBD)</td>
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**MS 2.3 ("Game Changer"): Pilot Project on Community Livability**

Sponsor a pilot project on community livability that models the opportunities of a strategic alliance between public and private sector service providers.

| Lead: (TBD) | Timeline: (TBD) | Funding Resources: (TBD) | Milestone: (TBD) |

**Thinking Forward: Other Potential Strategies for Member Services**

**MS 3: Succession Planning**

Develop "succession planning" strategies to support member organizations, including initiatives for attracting and retaining park & recreation talent, helping to ensure greater continuity and ongoing effectiveness of these organizations over time.

**MS 4: Peer-to-Peer Advisory Groups**

Sponsor and host peer-to-peer advisory groups that build on ORPA member services through virtual meetings, conference calls, and face-to-face meetings, promoting best practices and supporting ongoing professional development. Create different program formats to increase participation individually and geographically.
FOCUS AREA 3: TELLING OUR STORY
(Park & Recreation Advocacy)

BACKGROUND

What kinds of topics does this focus area address?

- Partnerships
- Public Outreach
- Communications
- Legislative Lobbying
- Marketing & Branding

Where we are today? Advocacy is a critical role for ORPA – both in Salem with State government and the Legislature, as well as with the public-at-large. Developing impactful messages around the economic, social and health benefits of parks and recreation is a significant leadership opportunity for ORPA. Fortunately, there is much research being directed at measuring these indicators on the national level. But what about a regional or statewide perspective? Shaping and leading a robust, multi-faceted, timely legislative agenda is another strategic priority for the organization. Finally, developing a connected, mutually supportive community of parks and recreation professionals is at the heart of the ORPA mission – bringing the collective knowledge and weight of ORPA’s membership to influence State policy, programs and budgets. In short, “We’re better together.”

What is the key question to be answered? What is the most important message we can develop and deliver statewide and in Salem?

What are the priority strategic issues to be addressed? At the ORPA Strategic Planning Summit participants identified the following priority strategic issues for Park & Recreation Advocacy:

- **Strategic Issue 1:** How will ORPA be proactive in Salem, working closely with our advocate to address issues directly impacting our membership?
- **Strategic Issue 2:** Partnerships are essential. How will ORPA support its member agencies to collaborate effectively?

Addressing these priority issues resulted in the strategies (and corresponding actions) that follow.

Other strategic issues identified by the process may suggest additional strategies and initiatives:

- Should ORPA be a leader in the urgent, statewide conversation concerning homelessness and affordable housing?
- How will ORPA utilize social media effectively to connect with our membership and with the communities we serve
- Should ORPA lead the conversation regarding recreation liability immunity, the impacts of PERS and minimum wage increases to agency budgets? What is our message?
## PRIORITY STRATEGIES & INITIATIVES FOR PARK & RECREATION ADVOCACY

### P&RA Strategy 1. Proactive Statewide Advocacy

Adopt a more proactive stance with the Oregon Legislature and State agencies, working closely with the ORPA Legislative Advocate on issues directly impacting ORPA members, and supporting legislation that advances its mission and vision.

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<tr>
<th><strong>P&amp;RA 1.1 (&quot;Do Better&quot;): ORPA Legislative Advocate Relations</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Involves ORPA's Legislative Advocate in the organization’s ongoing research, planning and programming, deepening this relationship and improving its efficacy through regular communication and engagement.</td>
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<th><strong>P&amp;RA 1.2 (&quot;Lean In&quot;): Documentation of Community Contributions</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Document a state-level assessment of the contributions made by park and recreation agencies and partners, including the private sector to the local economies, to the health and wellness of citizens, and to the livability of the communities they serve. Use this documentation to inform ORPA lobbying, advocacy, promotion and education.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>P&amp;RA 1.3 (&quot;Game Changer&quot;): Legislative Advocacy &amp; Communications Strategy</strong></th>
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<td>Develop and implement a comprehensive Legislative advocacy and communications strategy that targets state-level funding for parks and recreation agencies and service providers.</td>
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### P&RA Strategy 2. Collaborative Membership Advocacy and Outreach

Support ORPA's member agencies and their partners in collaborating more effectively, sharing information, ideas and resources of mutual benefit in advocating for their programs and services locally and statewide.

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<tr>
<th><strong>P&amp;RA 2.1 (&quot;Do Better&quot;): Improve Communications with Members</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Utilize existing and emerging social media more effectively, disseminating information on ORPA programs and services in new ways to reach its membership, especially younger and more diverse demographics.</td>
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### P&RA 2.2 ("Lean In"): Statewide Branding & Marketing Initiative

Develop a comprehensive branding and marketing strategy to communicate the positive impact of parks and recreation on the livability and economic vitality of the communities they serve.

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### P&RA 2.3 ("Game Changer"): Community Livability Initiative

Convene park and recreation community leadership concerning legislative and policy issues where parks and recreational programming are central to initiatives for improving and enhancing local community livability.

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### Thinking Forward: Other Potential Strategies for Parks & Recreation Advocacy

#### P&RA 3: Professional Degree/Certification in Park Administration & Services

Research and advocate on behalf of professional degree or certification program in park administration and services to help develop a pipeline for future P&R professionals in Oregon.

#### P&RA 4: Impact of PERS & State Minimum Wage on Park and Recreation Agencies

Lead the conversation regarding the impacts of PERS and minimum wage increases to public agency budgets as pertaining to their impacts on parks and recreation providers.

#### P&RA 5: Impact of Homelessness on Park and Recreation Agencies

Lead a statewide conversation concerning homelessness, including affordable housing, as pertaining to the impact on parks and recreation providers.

#### P&RA 6: Improve Outreach Tools

Host informational webinars to broaden outreach and mobilize membership, and local community leadership for more effective parks & recreation education and advocacy.
FOCUS AREA 4: PLANNING AHEAD
(Research & Long-Range Planning)

BACKGROUND

What kinds of topics does this focus area address?
- Environmental Scanning
- Long Range Planning
- NRPA Annual Conference & Resources
- Research & Development

Where we are today? ORPA serves an essential role as an aggregator of information on global, national and regional trends, impacts, challenges and opportunities for Oregon's park and recreation industry. The organization exists at a strategic nexus between a diverse membership of municipal, rural and urban agencies as well as their affiliates, vendors and partners, and a national network of park and recreation professionals, including NRPA. ORPA is the ‘keeper of the vision’ for all Oregon parks and programs. With its perspective on both trends of change and visionary ideas, ORPA is well positioned to provide information and ideas that drive innovation, keeping parks and recreation in Oregon on the leading edge.

What is the key question to be answered? What research, planning and networking programs and services will put ORPA membership on the leading edge of change and innovation?

What are the priority strategic issues to be addressed? At the ORPA Strategic Planning Summit participants identified the following priority strategic issues for Research & Long-Range Planning:

- **Strategic Issue 1**: How can ORPA assist members to balance recreation demand and tourism impacts with environmental stewardship?
- **Strategic Issue 2**: How can ORPA support socio-economic diversity of age, gender, and inclusion in the business of parks and recreation?

Addressing these priority issues resulted in the strategies (and corresponding actions) that follow.

Other strategic issues identified by the process may suggest additional strategies and initiatives:
- How will changing demographics and issues of social equity impact park experiences and program participation? What role does ORPA play? And how can ORPA set the example for equity and inclusion?
- How can ORPA assist members to innovate with creative programming that competes favorably with to include private providers and increase their membership within ORPA?
PRIORITY STRATEGIES & INITIATIVES FOR RESEARCH & LONG-RANGE PLANNING

R&LP Strategy 1. Balancing User Demand and Environmental Stewardship. Support and assist ORPA members in balancing the provision of parks and recreation facilities and programs with growing user demand including tourism and ongoing stewardship of the environment.

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<tr>
<th>R&amp;LP 1.1 (&quot;Do Better&quot;): Population Growth &amp; Environmental Impacts</th>
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<tr>
<td>Promote research, education and dissemination of information and resources for ORPA members on the impacts of population growth, development and environmental changes on the provision of park and recreation facilities and programs.</td>
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<tr>
<th>R&amp;LP 1.2 (&quot;Lean In&quot;): Leadership Role on Environmental Impacts of Recreation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support membership to take a leadership role, partnering locally on issues concerning environmental impacts of recreational demand and tourism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lead:</strong> (TBD)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R&amp;LP 1.3 (&quot;Game Changer&quot;): Statewide Conversation on Growth &amp; Environmental Impacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convene regional and state-level conversations on the impacts of tourism to sensitive environments as well as benefits to local economies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lead:</strong> (TBD)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R&LP Strategy 2. Supporting Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Support greater diversity, equity and inclusion in the business and delivery of park and recreation programs, the development of facilities and overall community engagement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R&amp;LP 2.1 (&quot;Do Better&quot;): Equity, Diversity &amp; Inclusion in Parks &amp; Recreation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actively explore and define what socio-economic equity, diversity and inclusion look like for park and recreation service providers in order to anchor a broader discussion among ORPA members and partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lead:</strong> (TBD)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### R&LP 2.2 ("Lean In"): Statewide Conversation on Diversity

Lead a conversation among ORPA members and the wider community on equity, diversity and inclusion through the lens of park and recreation programs and services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lead: (TBD)</th>
<th>Timeline: (TBD)</th>
<th>Funding Resources: (TBD)</th>
<th>Milestone: (TBD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### R&LP 2.3 (“Game Changer”) Implementing Social Equity

Develop and implement initiatives where park and recreation programs reflect the values of social equity and inclusion that have been identified.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lead: (TBD)</th>
<th>Timeline: (TBD)</th>
<th>Funding Resources: (TBD)</th>
<th>Milestone: (TBD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Thinking Forward: Other Potential Strategies for Research & Long-Range Planning

#### R&LP 3: Competitive Providers of Recreational Programming

Support members in developing and strengthening recreation programming that competes favorably with increasing public and private sector recreation providers.
APPENDIX A. ORPA Membership Strategic Planning Survey – Selected Results (November 2015)

The ORPA 2015 Strategic Planning Survey was fielded in the first half of November 2015. A final draft of the survey instrument can be found in Appendix A.

**Sampling**

The sampling approach was a mix of targeted and snowball samples, beginning with a targeted list of 862 potential respondents provided by ORPA based on the following criteria from their own database:

Any Member in the database who is not suspended, whose Membership is ANY of the following: 'Agency Basic Membership: 1 staff + 10 advisors, Agency Basic Membership: 2 staff + 5 advisors, Agency CBM, Agency Plus Fifteen Staff, Agency Plus Fifty Staff, Agency Plus Five Staff, Agency Plus Forty Staff, Agency Plus Ten Staff, Agency Plus Thirty Staff, Agency Plus Twenty Staff, Agency Plus Unlimited Staff, Commercial, Organization'

In the email recruitment messages, people were instructed to share the anonymous survey link with any others they felt might have input to share. Therefore, due to the anonymous nature of the survey, we are not able to estimate what percentage of respondents came from the sample list and what percentage came from snowballing from that original list.

**Survey recruitment**

Four email recruitment messages (see Appendix B for text) were sent to respondents on the following schedule:

- Invitation: November 6, 2015
- First reminder: November 9, 2015
- Second reminder: November 12, 2015
- Final reminder: November 16, 2015

56 emails bounced for each of the four messages.

**Responses**

The final response counts were as follows:

- 201 complete or partial surveys
- 27 partial surveys discarded due to answering only the first question

**174 Total surveys used in analyses**

We cannot be certain of the response rate due to the anonymous nature of the survey and the fact that respondents could have forwarded the link to create snowball sample members. That is, we cannot be sure of the total sample size to use in calculating a response rate.
Analyzes

Descriptive statistics for each of the quantitative questions of the survey are presented in this section first, with some text answers provided to illustrate follow up items or open text boxes for these questions. Then the four questions about internal and external challenges are summarized by primary role. Finally, key questions with open text responses are summarized.

What is your primary role in your profession related to P&R?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration (including finance, communications, etc.)</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>36.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning / development</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>46.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program coordinator (e.g., sports, after-school programs, senior programs, aquatics, therapeutic rec, outdoor recreation, community events, etc.)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>71.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park services (e.g., landscape, facilities maintenance and construction, natural resource management)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>87.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance / Board</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>90.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen advisory committee</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>92.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial services provider</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>96.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vendor (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rentals &amp; Park Reservations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[redacted to ensure anonymity] (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MACS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>174</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Which of the following best describes your primary P&R organization?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special district</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal / city / county organization</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>85.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>State organization</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>89.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractor, vendor, or trade organization</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>95.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Organization (2) Planning and Design Consultant</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>501 c7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>99.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### What is your professional title?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director - Upper management</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-manager - Supervisor</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>72.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>90.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary or seasonal employee</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>92.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retiree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>92.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>96.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisory</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>96.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Specialist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planner</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Ranger (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape Architect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please indicate and describe which of the following, from your perspective, is the greatest internal challenge facing your organization today.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffing</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>34.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational culture</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred maintenance</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>66.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital project budget</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>77.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material &amp; services budget</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>86.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>95.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure / Don’t know</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>98.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Management:**

“We need a long range plan to help us gain support as a "profession" and to help leverage partnerships to increase our facilities.”

“Top down organization with little communication from top. Also, difficulties in headquarters and field interactions.”

“Political interference against existing policies.”

“No accountability for the management level. Too many unnecessary management positions held by under-qualified people. Departments have proven that they can be successful with only supervisors leading the direction of the departments. Funds are being wasted on management positions that are not needed.”

“Many of the initiatives that are imposed upon the rest of us are not sustainable.”

**Staffing:**

“With seasonal workers only allowed 1200 hours a year, and many employees not even getting 20 hours a week there is high turnover.”

“We must produce so many exceptional activities, programs, classes and events with reduced staffing and it’s a significant challenge. Creativity for new ideas is also limited.”

“We have only three permanent employees and about 22 seasonal. New people require being trained and we don’t have the time to do it properly. We need a permanent maintenance person to do that.”

“We are not allowed by the Legislature to hire the amount of staff and particularly managers needed to do the job correctly or on time, despite having the funds to do so.”

“We are in a rural community and it is hard to find qualified applicants to fill - and retain- upper level positions. We also are having great difficulty filling part-time positions.”

“The inability to attract quality candidates to relocate to our area of the state.”

“Constant staff turn around makes it hard to offer consistent and successful programs.”

“Getting qualified entry level staff.”
**Organizational culture**

“With an increasingly diverse staff of age ranges, technical ability, etc., and an industry of trends, we are challenged with how to best appreciate employees while holding them accountable.”

“There's nothing "wrong" with our culture, but continuing to promote a creative, diverse, and efficient organization is key to ongoing success and requires reinventing ourselves as time goes on. We need to think more about this.”

“The recession created a culture of doing more with less, involving extra unpaid effort to provide high quality services. Now that the recession is over, we need to more quickly shift expectations back to pre-recession time, or we will burn staff out.”

“Persistent silo mentality versus everyone working as a team for the good of the whole.”

“Over the years, it seems like we've lost a lot of the "all in this together" feeling, and become much more of a large government bureaucracy.”

“Lack of consistency in HR procedures and processes.”

“I would love to see a culture that values education and giving back to the field through participation with conferences.”

**Deferred maintenance**

“There is as yet no long-term funding mechanism for maintenance. We have many parks/facilities that were built in the '70s and '80s that need rehab, plus no provision has been made for those facilities we've built since.”

“We do a lot with a little and some of the deferred maintenance is hard to see until it is too late and very costly.”

“Growing huge backlog.”

“We have aging facilities that are beginning present annual maintenance challenges. Coupled with deferred maintenance items that resulted during the recent economic downturn, there are many concerns and cost related challenges that need attention now, yet our overall (dept. and City) budget doesn't allow us to address these issues and quickly as they need to be addressed.”

**Capital project budget**

“We have a number of improvements identified for continued future use of our park at this point we are unsure of where the revenue stream will come from.”

“Setting realistic budgets for maintenance and new facilities.”

“Managing work load and the astronomical cost and time to get a project permitted.”

**Material & services budget**

“We have higher demand for service than our expenditure budget allows. Mainly staffing cost.”

“We are expected to take care of more acres with less staff.”

“Parks & Rec doesn't seem to be a priority in our organization. Very difficult to receive funding for new initiatives or expand programs.”
Other

“We've been doing so much for so long with so little. We are pushed well past our limits, both as staff members and regarding deferred maintenance. The greatest challenge is that our city council don’t seem to understand that this is an un-sustainable pattern.”
“Tremendous work loads.”
“Long Range Planning - Master Plan update needed to chart path forward, revenue generation not popular with public.”
“Lacking Recreation Degrees in Oregon - impacting the professionalism of the state.”
“Growing /changing quickly - it's a good thing, but a challenge nonetheless.”

Please indicate and describe which of the following, from your perspective, will be the greatest internal challenge facing your organization in the next 5 years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffing</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational culture</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>43.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred maintenance</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>63.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital project budget</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>71.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material &amp; services budget</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>83.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>93.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure / Don't know</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>171</td>
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<td>Missing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Management:

“With inadequate staffing and stable/shrinking funding, we are going to have to do much of the repair/construction work with park staff (like the old days). The problem is that a huge outflow of seasoned veterans due to retirement does not leave knowledgeable leaders to make this happen.”
“There are fractures and factions forming that will make upper management changes (retirements, etc.) difficult on all levels.”
“Managing growth.”
“How we utilize less funding.”
“Development of leadership and executive. Skills.”
“Beyond internal managers, the District is governed by the County Commissioners which are often busy with whole County matters and cannot dedicate more time/energy to effective service availability to a special district. A more dedicated governance is needed to better serve District needs.”
**Staffing:**

“We will have a number individuals retiring or leaving the organization in the near future. (Succession planning)”  
“We have had a reduction in force and have not hired to replace professional staff. To plug budget holes we have promoted from within. Ok for the short term but is going to hurt us long-term.”  
“Using staff to multi task under tight budgets.”  
“Part time staff being limited in the number of hour they can work, some months we need them to work more than the 24 hrs a week they’re allowed, difficult to manage special events.”  
“Lack of personnel interested in field.”  
“It will be interesting how the city will budget for staff when the minimum wage hits $15.00 per hour. Not only will seasonal employees be starting at that wage but those who return will want a wage of 17 or 18 because of experience. This would break our budget for seasonal staff, meaning a reduction in staff.”  
“Attracting and keeping quality staff.”

**Organizational culture:**

“Our city did not hire another parks and recreation director after the former long-time director retired. Parks was put under public works, and recreation became the domain of the community center director. The handwriting is on the wall: there is a lack of cohesion and long-range planning which will eventually hurt us internally and externally.”  
“Growing across multiple offices and maintaining the collaborative culture we have developed.”  
“Generational differences.”  
“Change in Superintendent will be good for the district but the change in employee culture will be very difficult because the mentality currently is, “that is the way we have always done it.”  
“Breaking down barriers between top management and staff.”

**Deferred maintenance:**

“With a growing district and increase in inventory the backlog of maintenance will increase.”  
“Will remain a concern for at least a decade.”

**Capital project budget:**

“Our programs are outgrowing our facilities, public demand requires greater facility flexibility which our aging facilities can't provide, our neighborhoods are growing and we do not have the capital funds at this time to acquire/develop new parks to serve new neighborhoods or re-purpose existing park spaces to accommodate changing/evolving community needs.”  
“Our bond funds are running low.”

**Material & services budget:**

“The cost to replace park equipment installed during the good years.”  
“Successfully identifying a source of ongoing funding for Parks and Recreation in our community will be a very big focus and challenge in the near future.”
“Our pay scale, and long-term financial plan, do not meet the needs of desirable candidates for employment.”
“Cost of doing business continues to outpace revenue.”
“Adding facilities that don’t take revenue.

**Other**

“Work habits of younger staff.”
“We have multi-million dollar road problem and no solution in sight, which puts a target on our department, so all aspects of our organization's budget are at risk.”
“Passing building and operations bond levy.”
“Effects of homelessness and other social ills on safety and security in parks.”

Please indicate and describe which of the following, from your perspective, is the greatest external challenge facing your organization today.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diminished funding</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community partnerships</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>40.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing demographics of park users</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>59.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The economy</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>68.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate change</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>70.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State and federal regulations</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>79.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unsure / Don’t know</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Diminished funding:**

“CVB Funding & Sponsorships.”
“Facilities are aging and lack of funding to replace them.”
“General fund pressure, competing for limited funding options.”
“I do not see increases coming anytime soon yet of course we need to expand and meet increasing needs.”
“Loss of gain share money.”
“No General Fund support - Taxes and fees seem to be only viable alternatives, becoming increasingly unpopular with public.”
“Our Community failed to support our proposed measure.”
“Parks & Rec programs being reduced/cut to fund public safety programs.”
“Secure financing for O&M.”
“The last three ballot measures failed to increase tax funding for the District which is has one of the lowest tax rates in the region compared to other urban public park providers. This reduces the ability of the District to build new parks/facilities and expand programming.”
“We have less user fees (inflation adjusted) and less tax support than in previous years.”
“We've doubled the size of our system in 15 years and decreased funding for maintenance over that time so that we have about 1/3 of what we need to successfully operate the park system annually.”

**Community partnerships:**

“Changing the paradigm for public/private partnerships and stewardship of these community assets.”
“Grass Roots support is lacking.”
“Partnerships are limited and transactional.”
“We are very territorial in our community. The major players do not come together enough to collaborate and develop our facility infrastructure to best serve the community (schools, city, college, etc.).”
“We depend on partnerships to provide all facilities.”
“We have a lot of work to do to build community trust via inclusive and effective partnerships and engagement.”

**Changing demographics of park users:**

“As a senior center, offering attractive programs and services to new seniors while not cutting off the established patrons on a stable but not growing budget will be challenging.”
“Finding an appropriate mix between active older users and younger park users.”
“Learning how to connect with others users, bring in new users.”
“Providing facilities that meet the demand of our park users, many of which may wish to see facilities that do not necessarily function just for traditional uses (more group areas, shelters).”
“Technology is pulling people away from parks.”
“Trying to keep up with the changing needs of park users whether it is providing bilingual signage, ensuring more trails and facilities are accessible and providing opportunities for larger groups through day use and camping facilities.”

**The economy:**

“Effectively competing for dollars with other activities available to patrons.”
“Many parents complain that costs are too high.”
“Our rural community tends to be among the last to feel the effects of a recession and the last to recover. Our very transient population of service workers, and lack of a local industry, cause ongoing economic difficulties and greatly affects participation and revenue.”
“Rural areas face reduced job opportunities and discretionary income for many who would otherwise participate in fee activities.”
“Still slowly coming out of recession.”
“We are a Low income community.”
“We are weather and economy dependent totally. It is difficult to build a rainy day fund when the General Fund is hurting for funds and sees any “surplus or savings” as fair game.”

**Climate change:**

[No descriptive comments provided]
State and federal regulations:

“If minimum hourly wage increases, it will affect budget and ability to provide services.”
“Insurance and worker hourly limitations.”
“Minimum salaries for exempt staff will be a large challenge for sustaining coaches”.
“Regulations that create unfunded liabilities and limit hiring to accommodate our many visitors. This is compounded by restrictions placed on us by the SEIU (labor union).”
“Some of our parks are iCOR owned. They impose regulations and stand in our way when we want to do anything.”
“State land use laws limit park development.”
“Too difficult to permit projects.”

Other:

“Balance between growth and maintenance.”
“Community perception of what is being provided by the department.”
“Expectations for customized solutions for all efforts.”
“General public perception of parks and Rec as an afterthought in budget and government services.
“Homelessness.”
“Impacts of illegal camping and other criminal activities in parks have introduced a new, huge, and growing cost center for park maintenance and operations.”
“Lack of Community Focus and NIMBYism.”
“Lack of trust in government.”
“Parents.”
“Piecemeal annexation of our District.”
“Rapid population growth.”

Please indicate and describe which of the following, from your perspective, will be the greatest external challenge facing your organization in the next 5 years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
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<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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<tr>
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<td>38.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Changing demographics of park users</td>
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<td>57.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>The economy</td>
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<td>Climate change</td>
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<td>68.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>State and federal regulations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>87.2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>174</td>
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</table>
**Diminished funding:** [many same as above]

“Set tax-base, but as technology, salaries & materials increase available subsidy amount decreases.”
“Successfully identifying sustainable funding over the long term will be critical to our long-term success.”
“The County views the donations made to our program as money they can use for their own purposes.”

**Community partnerships:**

“To continue we need to revitalize existing and develop new partnerships.”
“User groups are diminishing.”
“We need to get better at putting partners to work.”

**Changing demographics of park users:**

“Adapting to interests and needs, keeping pace.”
“Adapting to the diverse cultures and languages you where we can still provide equal services.”
“As our community ages needs will change.”
“Exciting to see change in preferences.”
“Having the capacity and resources to serve an increasingly complex public that is growing.”
“Staying in tune with the communities needs and desires even if it is different than what the staff sees as number one.”

**The economy:**

“Additional funding and support is hard to imagine when people are trying to get their own lives in order.”
“If the economy comes back strong, our local businesses rebound, and employment w/family wage jobs grow, we will have positive opportunities to grow our services and facilities in a manner that meets changing demands and expectations. If the economy remains stagnant, our programs and facilities will not be able to meet those same interests and expectations (which don't change despite the economy).”
“Increase in minimum wage and pressure to provide benefits to non-full time staff.”

**Climate change:**

“Last year we canceled every winter program we had for the first time since 1964. We need water to run raft trips and kayak classes.”
“We have huge challenges in maintaining our supply chains and utilities for existing programs and facilities if the trends continue.”
“We operate an indoor recreation facility with a pool, gymnasium, fitness rooms and indoor rock climbing wall. Rainy days used to send everyone inside ... but no more. I've joked to others that I need to figure out how to market for global warming - but as our revenue continues to drop it's becoming a serious issue.”
State and federal regulations:

“Increased regulations regarding mandatory sick leave, minimum wage, increase expenses thus increasing fees or decreasing funding for other programs to subsidize priorities.”
“Insurance and worker hourly limitations.”
“With ADA regulations, Pool regs, minimum wage increases and any other requirements balancing a budget becomes impossible.”

Other:

“Along with changing park users it is also where to draw the line at developing new facilities or areas for recreation use.”
“Annexation.”
“Charging participants full cost recovery for use.”
“Continued rapid population growth.”
“Hiring and keeping qualified new staff.”
“Increased need.”
“Increased park land purchases without funding to develop and maintain.”
“Maintaining quality.”
“Sustainability via Triple Bottom Line: Economics/Environment/Equity.”
“TOO Many people/new development.”

How do you currently engage with ORPA? Please select all that apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host, support, or attend ORPA workshop</td>
<td>88</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend conference</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>74.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attend section meetings</td>
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<td>33.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
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<td>4.6</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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In which of the following ways does ORPA add value to your professional development? Please select all that apply.

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<tr>
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<td>Programs / workshops / trainings</td>
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In which of the following ways does ORPA add value to your primary P&R organization? Please select all that apply.

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<tr>
<td>Networking / peer-to-peer learning</td>
<td>109</td>
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<td>Programs / workshops / trainings</td>
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<td>Legislative advocacy</td>
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<td>Professional certification</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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Please rate your satisfaction with the current ORPA programs and services in each of the following sections.

### Natural Resources Section

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<tr>
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### Administrative Section

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### Maintenance and Construction Section

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### Outdoor Recreation Section

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### Recreational Sports Section

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<td>11.5</td>
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### Section for Older Adult Resources (SOAR)

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<tr>
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### Section for Programming Interests (SPRINT)

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</table>
Please rate your satisfaction with these specific ORPA functions.

### Legislative advocacy

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### Workshops

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### Conference

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Leadership/Professional development

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Awards and recognition

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ORPA — Trends, Issues and potential Vision Ideas

Based upon initial survey results conducted with ORPA membership (174 total respondents), and stakeholder interviews of 13 park and recreation professionals, representing a cross section of membership, NXT Consulting identified four broad focus areas for the purpose of vision and strategic planning:

Focus Area 1: Who We Are – Organizational Development
Focus Area 2: How We Serve – Member Services
Focus Area 3: Telling Our Story – Park & Recreation Advocacy
Focus Area 4: Planning Ahead – Research & Long-Range Planning

Stakeholders interviewed represent rural, urban, municipal agencies, special districts, state parks, recreation specialists, planning directors, park services, past ORPA president, three Executive Directors, outgoing ORPA ED and current legislative lobbyist. We asked the following questions of key ORPA stakeholders to deepen our understanding of survey results:

•  What are the biggest external trends impacting parks and recreation today?
•  What are the internal issues challenging most park and recreation agencies?
•  What should be the role of ORPA for its membership going forward?
•  What would be the ‘one big move’ for ORPA?
•  Looking out 10 years, where do you want to see ORPA?
•  How will we know if ORPA is delivering on its promises? (Measures for success?)
•  What are three words that best define ORPA?

Focus Area 1: Who We Are – Organizational Development

Summary: ORPA finds itself at an opportune moment to build from a strong foundation of leadership and an energized board of visionary P&R professionals. It flagship annual conference is well-regarded and offers an important platform for professional development, statewide networking and coordination around shared initiatives.

One of the more intriguing ideas that surfaced through the interviews: Creating a regional ‘NRPA West’, in coordination with Western states.

Attracting and hiring an outstanding candidate to fill the executive director role is broadly supported. So is a deeper relationship with legislative lobbyist and an emphasis on a strong presence in Salem.

The measure of success? Increased membership and a mainstream acknowledgement of ORPA (as the voice) of parks and recreation in Oregon.
Issues related to the organizational structure of ORPA included:

- Increase the professionalism and leadership; less like a club, “If this organization went away, would it matter? Not necessarily....”
- Have to be more than just a ‘conference’. We’ve got to pay for good leadership.
- ORPA is moving in the right direction; they have improved – keep moving in this direction.
- ORPA: Tiers of membership, i.e.: what do you get for what you pay? We value a strong state level association.
- Agencies are going to have to pay more for an awesome ED.
- Ambitions always exceed resources; especially staff and time. People like to be on the board, but people pull back from being deeply engaged. Cultivate strong leadership.
- Washington/Oregon conference/PNW orientation?
- Strategic plan is essential. There isn’t a crisis, making this a good time to assess needs.
- Consider re-structuring board make-up (too large/unwieldy...too many sections, some of which are not that active)
- Consolidate administration, expand educational opportunities.
- ORPA COULD be better funded; we grew revenue 25-30% when SR was there. We’ve never done direct donation/outreach to membership. There is an opportunity to develop this to better fund administrative/operations.
- ORPA is 2/3rd on the list of priorities for volunteers. You get what you pay for. Every time we put something ambitious out there, people were responsive. Raised conference registration fees, no one batted an eye.
- ORPA needs to work with Cindy Robert, our Legislative Advocate as staff; include her at board meetings, work closely to identify rural/urban cultural issues and diversity of membership priorities. CR could write ‘white papers’ on key issues to deepen appreciation for issues facing ORPA membership.
- Organizational structure is a challenge: board members are not necessarily great at running a non-profit. Work to fix leadership structure.
- Stronger cultivation/screening of board members. We gradually raised the bar of expectations, but there is more work to do.
- Officer structure needs close review as well. One-year term as president is a real problem.
- Restructuring the board, changing presidency term, staffing, change sections structure so we are not carrying them – (for ex: recreation).
- The organization is still there. Have resources/programs been expanded?
- Membership numbers are up; cultivate more donors, product providers as members?
- You have a receptive group – career professionals who are young/hungry.
- Find a good executive director! ORPA deserves strong leadership.
• We lost good leadership when Stephanie moved on; we need to be sure to replace her well. We don’t want to lose ground.

• See CA park and rec association; Illinois has a smaller footprint, but is a good example.

• ORPA board membership could be more diverse – race, faith, rural, urban, municipal, special district

• You want people to actually want to follow you. Do you want to have killer metrics or do you want to be an org that people want to be a part of?

• Internal systems review for ORPA.

• Focus closer in – 3-5 years. If we could generate more revenue through regional trainings, you could afford 1-2 additional staff members to develop trainings.

• Partner with other states to offer regional trainings. Don’t compete for scarce resources; combine resources for regional solutions.

• Implement 3-4 big initiatives, and reconsider in 3-5 years if those initiatives need to be expanded and/or revamped. Growth in membership key indicator of success.

• Fundraise for final 10% of annual budget; the rest needs to be covered by programming/conference fees, etc.

• Until Stephanie, we didn’t have great leadership. ORPA has been thought of as the ‘little brother’ – hasn’t been out front as a champion for P&R in the state. I hope we can recommit resources to get someone outstanding.

• You’re only as good as your leadership/priorities and the work you set out for yourself!!

• Opportunity based perspective: Do good work, people will follow and fund it.

• “Have a personal ax to grind re: NRPA – no significant value from this group.” No training offered to the west coast. They don’t seem to be interested in us. ORPA in collaboration with other member organizations on west coast need to coordinate and establish NRPA West. Become more relevant as a provider of education/training/emphasis. NRPA professional certification feels irrelevant; there probably is SOME marginal benefit to training, but the workbooks/questions, etc. reflect the orientation of the east coast. How we budget, what we pay attention to out west is very different. Staff has to memorize the lexicon of the east coast; once we get the certification we can adapt.

• Agree with the ‘western ORPA’ concept. Is there a way we could partner with other states to create a regional network of professionals and training opportunities? Every 5 years, combine with Washington/Idaho for ex to provide training and leadership for agencies.

• On the legislative level, a west/regional approach might be beneficial in our communication with congress. We’d get more traction, more funding that is appropriate to our region and needs. Municipalities are out of the mix without ORPA as an advocate for legislative funding.

• If ORPA makes this move, we will be a more relevant provider of member services – reflected in a stronger conference; many staff does not feel the conference is relevant.

• Prioritize – keep a focus
• Bring OPA into the fold – this reintegration is an important step forward. Scarcity of resources creates a tension that fueled separation – not really necessary or good for the long haul.
• Board and organization is in a good place to do this work.
• Equal number of members in 5 years; has repeated high level of attendance at conference, has successfully advocated for advancement of above initiatives.

Focus Area 2: How We Serve – Member Services

Summary: Among the challenges facing ORPA membership, finding and keeping trained talent is an issue statewide. Without a regional university degree program, professional development, resource sharing between member organizations is key. This is an important role for ORPA to play. Skill development and leadership programs for membership could offer an additional revenue stream for ORPA to fund staff.

Issues related to membership for ORPA include:

• Public sector pay is low; hard to attract quality employees, public employees work really hard
• Rate structures for programs may need to increase/SDCs are tapped out.
• Diversity: Contracting for diversity in hiring, contracting, hiring for summer camp counselors – talking interviews vs. writing interviews result in a more diverse hiring.
• Focus on education, collaboration. Support the sections to develop good trainings, share good information, best practices. Bring together the voices of park providers to strengthen impressions/messages around needs, relevancy.
• Educational programs, conference and administrators forum, getting new ideas out, network, share resources.
• The challenge for ORPA is to define this role as advocate and voice of parks, but to narrowly define the work so that they are not everything to everybody.
• Retirement/brain drain
• We’re all scraping over the same pie; need to coordinate and cooperate better. We are pretty silo’ed.
• We have momentum, we have done a lot in past 12 years, work towards preventing staff burnout – can’t take on much more.
• Pace of growth.
• New staff, cultural nuances, on-board new folks well.
• Recruiting for two-income households.
• Increasing cost of doing business, standards the community is used to diminish by increased costs.
• Minimum wage/PERS.
• Equity within the field, because of limited resources.
• Staffing, recruitment, retention/out-migration of really good folks, need public agencies to be good employers. Tied to funding, but not completely.
• Succession, retirement of senior staff, meeting community expectations/needs, funding competition from other service providers.
• Need to expand full-time staff, don’t have a deep applicant pool, hard to recruit, don’t have a lot of the amenities that attract Millennials.
• There is a tendency to fight amongst other departments for scarce resources; park utility fund, hotel/motel tax, used for debt service. We can use this to fund SDC deficit; but the council can change their opinion at any time.
• Getting well-qualified staff into agencies; no training for professionals. Not a big talent pool in state. Succession planning is tough; limited pool of employees.
• Fiscal constraints w/in agency – this makes it difficult to respond to changing needs.
• Personnel costs are challenging – PERS, insurance, minimum wage are testing our ability to maintain service levels; we’re in competition with police/fire as a municipal department. Especially challenging in Oregon with our limited tax structure.
• General fund budget support is limited; there’s continued pressure to become self-sufficient, do more with less

Focus Area 3: Telling Our Story – Park & Recreation Advocacy

Summary: Advocacy, in Salem as well as with the public, is a huge role for ORPA. Membership seems hungry for professional development programs, inter-membership resource sharing, and developing impactful messages to the general public about the economic, social and health benefits of parks and recreation. The annual state conference could be expanded with workshops and in-depth sessions relating to national trends and external impacts from issues such as homelessness, obesity and climate change.

Issues related to the advocacy role of ORPA include:

• Frequent updates to a diverse membership regarding legislative advocacy
• Park districts are developers/they pay their fair share of SDCs, etc.
• Yet there’s more benefit than JUST the park to the community.
• Equity and inclusion work is essential; ORPA can play an educational role, starting a conversation on this. Please provide workshops/sessions on this issue.
• ORPA could be more involved on the legislative front; actually have an "ask" for the legislature, not just reactive.
• See California Park and Recreation Association: Statewide messaging campaign.
• Collective economic impacts of P&R – spearheaded by ORPA?
• Format is similar to national conference – smorgasbord: 40-50m dedicated to most topics – just a sampling. No opportunity for in-depth exploration. I would like to see multiple hour sessions; role up sleeves and practice.

• Texas/Ft. Worth congress was designed with samplings as well as ½ day workshops that explored ideas more deeply.

• Training, leadership, supporting staff with professional growth

• Leadership forums on affordable housing, for ex.

• Focus groups expanded with topics that are OR centric, share resources on issues

• Network within OR, maintain, execute, provide training beyond entry level staff

• Better quality, conference is perceived to be ‘social’; this is important, but how might we blend the two to deliver professional growth across the organizational spectrum?

• Maybe a formula with more frequent, quality training opportunities, or on-line?

• Perceived value needs to be paid attention to: High caliber presenters/issue focused group discussions

• Without a university degree program, ORPA could make a bit of money and afford a top-notch ED. Expand on pre/post conference for these sessions.

• Re: ORPA ‘Leadership Academy’: It’s expensive to send staff to trainings. Why not develop more training opportunities locally? Expand on LA; professional development/continuing education in our field is really important.

• Hold another symposium for elected officials in S. Oregon. How can we let elected folks know about issues facing ORPA.

• NRPA is all urban, all the time.

• ORPA has felt “clique-y,” and not welcoming...this is changing, but ORPA could do more outreach to member organizations. For ex: Jan Wirtz brings in younger staff, introduces them to colleagues, etc. Our values speak to this, but how can we live this better?

• Site visits to different locations, hosting, true networking, capacity within the sections varies.

• Message the value of P&R in general.

• Been doing a great job with wide variety of trainings for members. Continue to spread this throughout the state.

• Professional development is important; mid-managers and up should be a top priority.

• Forecasting trends, sharing best practices borrowing from other parts of the country. Sharing this info and disseminating key data.

• ORPA –An ‘extension’ agent: share best practices from other agencies/professionals.

• Nothing happening with Leadership Academy – this was a the #1 thing folks were asking for (no in-state university program, so this is important)

• Connections, networking, education, sharing, elevating the long-term vision, leadership
• ORPA could write standards, take leadership role (check AWA)
• Building community amongst agencies.
• Becoming a leader, a stronger advocate in the legislature, communicating the many benefits of parks and recreation programming.
• Lead as partner with education and health care professionals, collaborative, regional leader.
• Partnership with cities/municipalities is key.
• Storytelling is key – “thanks to voters, we are able to repair this ball field/playground”.
• Consistently reinforce key message points/stay transparent and accountable.
• ORPA host summit on homelessness related to parks, communities.
• Network with other organizations nationally...rural/smaller communities can benefit from larger metros.
• More work on public outreach; “come play in our arena vs. going to them”.
• How do we reach minorities, homeless, low-income?
• Branding tools could be shared; resources could be shared—ads, etc.
• Also, legislative advocacy, i.e.: put ORPA on the minds of decision makers/funding allocation, etc.
• SCORP: Increased perception of value, investment in services, engagement, volunteerism, economic, social, environmental, and personal.
• Huge opportunity for ORPA: nothing says ‘community’ better than parks and rec.
• Travel OR: We were known for the bottle bill, save the beaches, etc. Improve our national recognition that OR is committed to environmental causes, etc.
• Also, agencies need to promote themselves (Bend is an exception); the more we promote, the broader support.
• Advocacy in Salem is essential, as well as promoting ideas within member agencies. Senior leaders/directors retreat is a good opportunity to seed this.
• There is a role for ORPA to do some type of funding request to ask for $$ statewide. We started this conversation last fall; need to continue this emphasis.
• Tell our message via newsletter, updates, multi-media approach, engage membership.
• ORPA is becoming recognized around the capital; legislators are asking ‘what does ORPA think?’ We need to continue with a high profile.
• Continue to provide a leadership role on economic contribution of recreation.
• Professional development is really important; mentorship program for young professionals is important
• Advocacy/lobbying in Salem. ORPA has been involved with funding from lottery dollars.
• Consider legislative lobbyist as staff, not as a consultant
• Legislative committee should fine tune platform in January of each year
• Legislative committee should consider an addendum to platform each year on current issues, i.e.: minimum wage, paid sick leave, etc. Lobbyist can look for opportunities to coordinate and advance alongside other issues/legislation.

• Funding can be tricky in that ORPA represents state parks, counties, special districts—coordination is key: Where are the common themes? Sometimes, regulations put organizations into conflict with each other. Conflict between county/state parks regarding funding from lottery, others. How do we do what’s best for P&R in entire state?

• Role of ORPA: Simply advocacy. We are a diverse state/membership; the needs for education, training, professional development, legislative advocacy.

• Advocating for our membership in legislature.

• Professional development (great conference, workshop schedule throughout the year)
  Networking opportunities are key.

• Connection to the field; connect around the state.

• Push for statewide funding from state legislature; tell our story, bring together themes to prove economic contribution of P&R to our communities and to our state.

• Collect data to support this assertion

• “Did you know we create this many jobs, this much revenue within the state.” We need to develop information to inform this.

• Want to be the ‘go to’ for questions from legislators, professionals entering the field, resources, training, when people move to OR and want to explore and know about programs and services, they know of ORPA. We want to reach all the way down to the individual participant level as a great resource, steward of resources, steward of land, steward of people.

• Connect the rural/smaller park districts to larger P&R community of professionals.

• Foster collegiality and mutual support within OR parks and recreation.

• Working closely with NRPA is important.

• Need good ROI – here’s how we’re delivering more – a collective endeavor of the membership.

• Bump up the services – networking, resource sharing, perspective statewide, leadership training, lobbying – we are better together!

• We have never passed a municipal bond measure – educating our community on the benefits of P&R is so important.

• Adjacent to lots of public lands; we manage as much as some of the larger districts in the state, but we don’t have the resources to maintain. We have looked at forming a park district, but the political climate is not favorable.

• Conference needs to be bigger and better; there are revenue streams that need to be explored – pre/post sessions could be cash cows – John Crompton, for ex. Directors retreat, for example: it’s incredibly valuable for colleagues to meet. We spend too much time bragging about what we do, what we have vs. a collaborative effort.
Focus Area 4: Planning Ahead – Research & Long-Range Planning

**Summary:** For the park and recreation industry, high-level issues impacting excellent service delivery are similar to other sectors, with homelessness, changing demographics, personnel costs, challenges to revenue and funding streams and environmental concerns topping the list. Professionals interviewed are consistently optimistic, if a little exhausted about many of these challenges. ORPA could play an important role as an aggregator of information around trends, resources and inspiration.

**Issues related to ‘looking ahead’, include:**

- Homelessness in public parks. (Josh Albert – Mayors office, tasked with homeless issue)
- Changing society – cultural awareness, densification.
- How do you plan for maintenance over the long haul?
- Park rangers are needed; changing behaviors in the parks.
- Stable funding – most units do not have long-term funding that keeps up with cost of services
- Facility maintenance/upgrades are behind, or we have new facilities that we can’t maintain
- Relevancy – people are starting to recreate in new ways. Younger gen want experience indoors, electronics, not drawn to outdoors in the same ways.
- Also many mid-lifers lack an outdoor connection. Later generation (45+) like to recreate – we currently meet their needs but accessibility.
- Changing demographics in Oregon demand new thinking on park amenities. We’re not attracting folks to our parks from varied backgrounds. This comes to bear on facilities, programs, etc.
- Entrepreneurial/business focus, partnerships, leadership.
- Competition between providers of similar services is huge, competition for participation in programs.
- Individuation of experiences, inclusivity, boomer demographics are more active.
- No formula, public opinion of government is negative, disenfranchised (Republicans, Democrats. Harney County, etc.).
- Balancing recreation with environmental stewardship. Also, impacts from tourism – stewardship of resources.
- Diversity and equity – not just a trend.
- Making sure we are serving ALL our citizens, across socio-economic spectrums; equal access to services and facilities; paying attention to engaging underserved populations.
- Changing demographics; technology and the younger generation/we must keep them engaged.
- Undercurrent: private rec providers create competition.
• Conservation spectrum. Larger agencies with abundant lands are active with conservation...making our urban parks more like nature preserves...partner with land conservation orgs.

• Land use laws.

• Continued support for SDCs, other funding sources.

• Maintaining support for the benefits P&R provide a community (Gresham, Salem got rid of their recreation programs!).

• Minimum wage increase (going to cost BPRD $1m!)

• Continued demand for services without new funding resources.

• Changing/aging demographics – how do you engage them as volunteers as well as customers?

• More accessibility to the outdoors.

• Inclusion services are in greater demands – aides in programs for behavioral issues, physical issues. Our budget has increased from 30k-100k, with no new resources. Have to increase fees/subsidize.

• Mandates on minimum wage, sick leave, affordable care act/health insurance. This impacts service levels

• Increasing/changing demographics...ethnicity, economic.

• Health risk factors increasingly coming into play – obesity shapes services our citizens need/request; drug and alcohol use on the uptick.

• General cynicism about governmental services seems to be increasing; a challenge to programs at the local level. How do we respond?

• Rapid evolution of social media – this has gotten in front of our ability to take advantage of it, as well as keeping up with our customers in the way things are communicated.

• In Oregon, homelessness in parks is huge; increased need to deal with mental illness. We’re a part of the solution, but need to work cooperatively.

• Deferred maintenance; budgets can’t keep up with aging facilities in systems, from state parks to Portland parks to local communities.

• Increased demand for special needs populations, i.e.: transgender, autism spectrum, etc.

• Policy: minimum wage requirements and impacts to staffing.

• Marijuana usage/smoke free zones.

• Being a municipality, PERS – 30% increase, minimum wage increase, the requirement for health insurance, huge impacts to staffing costs, have to compete for public funds in a conservative community.