



Nonprofit Strategy Optimization in Albany, Oregon
Spring 2017 • Planning, Public Policy, and
Management

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About SCI

The Sustainable Cities Initiative (SCI) is a cross-disciplinary organization at the University of Oregon that promotes education, service, public outreach, and research on the design and development of sustainable cities. We are redefining higher education for the public good and catalyzing community change toward sustainability. Our work addresses sustainability at multiple scales and emerges from the conviction that creating the sustainable city cannot happen within any single discipline. SCI is grounded in cross-disciplinary engagement as the key strategy for improving community sustainability. Our work connects student energy, faculty experience, and community needs to produce innovative, tangible solutions for the creation of a sustainable society.

About SCYP

The Sustainable City Year Program (SCYP) is a year-long partnership between SCI and one city in Oregon, in which students and faculty in courses from across the university collaborate with the partner city on sustainability and livability projects. SCYP faculty and students work in collaboration with staff from the partner city through a variety of studio projects and service-learning courses to provide students with real-world projects to investigate. Students bring energy, enthusiasm, and innovative approaches to difficult, persistent problems. SCYP's primary value derives from collaborations resulting in on-the-ground impact and expanded conversations for a community ready to transition to a more sustainable and livable future.

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About Albany, Oregon

The city now known as Albany has an established history as a central hub in the Willamette valley. Founded in 1848 and incorporated in 1864 the city has served as the Linn County seat since 1851. Albany's unique place in Oregon's history is exemplified in its dedication to historical preservation. Albany is often noted to have the most varied collection of historic buildings in Oregon. Its "four historic districts are listed in the National Register of Historic Places by the United States Department of the Interior." This downtown core has served as the center of revitalization efforts since 2001.

Located on the Willamette and Calapooia rivers Albany spans both Linn and Benton counties. With a population of 51,720 people, Albany is Oregon's 11th largest city and the second largest city in Benton County. Albany is administered under a home rule charter, adopted in 1957 establishing a Council and City Manager model. The city's vision, to be a "vital and diverse community that promotes a high quality of life, great neighborhoods, balanced economic growth and quality public services," is exemplified by its administration and government. Albany has a very active civic community with nearly 100 citizens serving on advisory commissions and committees dedicated to municipal issues.

Historically, Albany's economy has relied on natural resources. As the self-styled "rare metals capital of the world," Albany produces zirconium, hafnium and titanium. Major employment sectors include "wood products, food processing, and manufactured homes." Because of its short, dry temperate growing season Albany farmers excel in producing specialized crops like grass flower and vegetable seeds, "tree fruits, nursery stock, nuts, berries, mint and grains." Albany and the surrounding (Linn and Benton) counties are so agriculturally productive it is often called "The Grass Seed Capital of the World."

Albany's central location and mild climate has made it a popular destination for a variety of outdoor and leisure activities. Located in the heart of Oregon's most populous region with the Pacific coast to the west and the Cascade Range to its east, Albany is connected to the wider state by Interstate 5, Oregon Routes 99E and 34, and US Route 20. The city is also served by Amtrak, a municipal airport, and a local and regional bus network.

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This report represents original student work and recommendations prepared by students in the University of Oregon’s Sustainable City Year Program for the City of Albany. Text and images contained in this report may not be used without permission from the University of Oregon.

Executive Summary

Professor Dyana Mason's Nonprofit Consultancy class worked in three groups to advise Albany community members and city staff in three distinct subject areas. Students assessed the current state of the Albany Senior Center Foundation (ASCF), the Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation (APRF), and the Albany Parks and Recreation Department (APRD) to provide detailed recommendations for the future goals of these organizations.

The Albany Senior Center Foundation group visited the senior center; reviewed supporting documents; and completed a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis based on interviews with key stakeholders. These methods aided in identification of key strategic issues and operational development. Based on these findings, the group concluded that the ASCF would benefit from becoming more autonomous, increasing visibility, and energizing their mission and purpose.

The Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation group worked closely with APRF to assess their operational status. The students established two clear goals for the foundation: 1) Develop a sustainable board; and 2) Build public trust and integrity. The group completed a comprehensive strategic plan with detailed recommendations to achieve these goals. The students also developed and adapted tools and foundational documents to aid in APRF's future growth.

The Albany Parks and Recreation Department group evaluated opportunities for increased collaboration among APRD, local nonprofit organizations, and public service providers. The students identified four areas of mutual interests that are well suited for collaboration efforts: 1) Promoting public health; 2) Improving engagement with Latino communities; 3) Increasing access to safe transportation; and 4) Investing in outdoor sports facilities. The team recommended using the collective impact model to shift APRD from a series of one-to-one transactional partnerships to a multi-organizational collaborative effort.

Introduction

The City of Albany is a dynamic and vibrant community, and its central location and mild climate has made it a popular destination for a variety of outdoor and leisure activities. In addition, Albany plays an important role in connecting residents from the greater surrounding area with much needed government and nonprofit services. Albany's nonprofit organizations strive to serve the needs of their clients, and create a more harmonious community.

The City of Albany partnered with the Sustainable City Year Program and the University of Oregon Planning, Public Policy, and Management's spring 2017 Nonprofit Consultancy class to address the needs of three distinct organizations. The team focusing on the Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation (APRF) concentrated on defining the structures, steps, and capacity required for APRF to operate as a sustainable and successful nonprofit organization separate from Albany Parks and Recreation. The team focusing on the Albany Parks and Recreation Department (APRD) concentrated on assessing the department's current nonprofit and public service provider partnerships while evaluating opportunities for increased collaboration to meet APRD's mission. The team focusing on the Albany Senior Center Foundation (ASCF) concentrated on defining the most appropriate and effective ways ASCF could meet the needs of seniors and the Albany Senior Center (ASC). This group also pinpointed relevant objectives for ASCF and recommended a more effective way of organizing their involvement with ASC.

The students in these three teams collaborated with city staff to find solutions and make recommendations. Using a variety of methods, these groups developed personalized proposals designed to address each organization's specific needs and help them move forward successfully.

Senior Center Foundation Strategic Plan



June 2017
Prepared for the Senior Center Foundation
PPPM 688 Nonprofit Consultancy
Rachel Anderson, Rachel Mallinga and Justin Sandoval

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Executive Summary

This document was developed as a planning tool to help the Albany Senior Center Foundation prepare for new phases of growth, and to guide the organization as it evolves to better serve the needs of the Albany Senior Center. The Foundation exists to support the activities of the Senior Center, but unfortunately it has experienced some instability over the last few years. The Foundation board, however, is rebuilding and regaining its footing and direction.

The goal of this report is to aid the Senior Center Foundation in determining how it can best serve the Senior Center now and into the future. We have sought to outline the Foundation's immediate operational needs so it can build capacity and therefore enact its mission. Our hope is to aid the organization in achieving its full potential by helping the stakeholders further understand where the organization is now and where the organization should be to accomplish its mission.

To develop this report, our student team conducted a site visit, received supporting documents for review, and completed a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis based on interviews with key stakeholders. These methods were used to aid our identification of key strategic issues and operational development. We concluded based on these findings that the Senior Center Foundation would benefit from becoming more autonomous, increasing visibility, and energizing their mission and purpose.

Introduction

This strategic plan was completed as a capstone project by University of Oregon Department of Planning, Public Policy, and Management graduate students in collaboration with the Sustainable Cities Initiative and representatives of the Albany Parks and Recreation Department. This capstone is facilitated through instructor Dyana Mason's PPM 688 Nonprofit Consultancy course.

Organizational Overview

The Senior Center Foundation's current scope is to support the activities and programs of the Albany Senior Center, which is run by the City of Albany's Parks and Recreation Department. The Senior Center Foundation provides a voice for members and provides funding support for Center programming.

Membership includes any individual who participates in the programs, services and activities offered by the Albany Senior Center. Participation is open to any person 50 years of age or older. There are no membership fees or dues.

Mission: Albany Area Seniors, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable organization whose purpose is to support and promote recreational experiences and socialization opportunities offered by the Albany Senior Center to older adults in the community.

Senior Center: The Senior Center was built in the mid-1970s and was renovated in 1986. Both the original build and the renovation were heavily driven by efforts from the Senior Foundation. The Senior Center and recreation programs for older adults (not all are held at the Senior Center) are part of the Recreation Division of Albany's Parks and Recreation Department.

The Senior Center provides classes, workshops, trips, and tours. The Senior Center also houses the Meals on Wheels program, and acts as a social center for seniors.

Organizational Structure

The Senior Center Foundation is a private, 501(c)(3) that works in close cooperation with the City of Albany to provide services for older citizens. The affairs of the Foundation are managed by a board of directors. The board is comprised of board officers including the president, vice president, and secretary/treasurer, as well as representatives from many of the Senior Center activities groups, and Albany Parks and Recreation Department staff representatives.

Current Board officers:

- President – Debbie Walker
- Vice President – Thelma Chowning
- Secretary/Treasurer – Ellie Munson

Senior Center Program Representatives:

- Gift Shop – Cathy Schlecht
- Trip Rep – Connie Lanham
- Host/Hostesses Table – Debbie Walker
- Call-A-Ride – Linda Nix
- Nutrition Program – Jackie Hoyer
- Pool Room – Roy Poppleton
- Quilters – Shirley Armstrong

Other Board Members:

- Endowment – Lise Grato
- At Large member – Pat Pullen

Senior Center Staff Liaisons:

- Senior Center Director
- Coordinators
- Specialists

Participation on the board is open to any person 50 years or older unless prohibited by a specific program's guidelines. Typically, members serve only two consecutive terms, and there are no membership fees.

Methodology

The work of this report is informed by:

- Site visits to Albany Senior Center
- Document review of provided literature
- SWOT analysis of stakeholders
- Research Question

Site Visit

We organized a site visit to the Parks and Recreation Department to better understand the Foundation, its work, and its culture. Meeting with employees that were familiar with the organization helped us begin our planning process. We learned the history of the Foundation and the context that we would be working within. Then, we toured the Albany Senior Center where we experienced many of the activities and services offered to clients.

Document Review

We reviewed internal documents of the organization to better understand their governance, programming, operations, and finances, including:

- Foundation Budget
- Board Agendas and Minutes from September 2008 to present
- Program Narrative
- Organizational Constitution and Bylaws

SWOT Interview and Analysis

Additionally, the planning process for this report is informed by a SWOT interview and analysis process. This consisted of a series of ten interviews with key Foundation stakeholders, including board members and Albany Parks and Recreation staff, followed by an analysis of the information collected. A SWOT analysis is an environmental assessment that involves a review of an organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Strengths and weaknesses are usually viewed as internal, while opportunities and threats are viewed as external. This environmental assessment "is the objective cataloging and measuring of the facts and conditions that exist at a point in time and which must be recognized" by an organization for it to maximize its strengths and improve on its weaknesses. In other words, a SWOT analysis seeks to objectively reveal an organization's status, both internally and externally. The SWOT analysis process provides a productive place from which the board can begin informed strategy formulation. This process better equips the board to "fulfill its stewardship and agency obligations."¹

1 Berman, Making a Difference: The Management and Government of Nonprofit Enterprises

In ten confidential SWOT interviews, stakeholders were asked:

1. Their relationship to the Foundation.
2. Their interpretation or understanding of the Foundation's mission statement.
3. What they believe the Strengths of the Foundation are.
4. What they believe the Weaknesses of the Foundation are.
5. What they see as Opportunities for the Foundation.
6. What they see as Threats to the Foundation.
7. Additionally, stakeholders were given space to discuss other comments or concerns about the organization.

After collecting and analyzing this information, we developed three key findings (found in the Organizational Analysis section) on which we based our recommendations for the Foundation.

Research Question

Two questions guided our activities:

1. What is the most appropriate and effective role for the Albany Senior Center Foundation to meet the needs of older adults and the Albany Senior Center?
2. What objectives should they pursue and what is the most effective way to organize and structure their involvement?

SWOT Interview Results

Strengths

Stakeholders identified that the Foundation provides Senior Center members with three key benefits: 1) A voice for their needs; 2) Financial assistance; and 3) A community. The Foundation can provide access to 501(c)(3) grants as well as funding for activities that the city cannot support. The Foundation provides a space for Senior Center members to express their needs, concerns, and hopes. Currently, it serves as a sounding board for seniors. In this capacity, it can collect feedback about many aspects of the Senior Center. It is apparent that the board is invested and concerned with the health of the Senior Center, because several representatives of activity groups are board members.

"[The Senior Center] has an open door; everyone is welcome. It's like family here."

"The people on the board care a great deal about the Senior Center and the people it impacts."

Weaknesses

The stakeholders revealed that the Foundation's board is currently inactive, but its members occasionally meet. Due to board member turnover and low attendance, the Foundation's historical perspective has drifted with its organizational structure staying the same. The Foundation's work is not common knowledge among Senior Center participants. The perception of the Foundation being solitary in its activities creates a perception that the Foundation isn't valuable to the greater community.

Board meetings have become more of an advisory board that isn't completely aligned with the Foundation's mission. Follow-up on issues presented and discussed during board meetings are often not addressed again or implemented. Some stakeholders felt there was little or no follow-up. It was suggested that this could be partly due to the irregularity of scheduled board meetings. A desire for a recurring meeting time was expressed. It was suggested that the decrease in member attendance might be addressed by giving the meetings more structure.

"[The Foundation] isn't well-organized around clear goals and objectives."

"The organization of the Foundation has no solid framework. What does it want to do and how does it want to do that?"

Opportunities

The stakeholders feel that creating a legacy for future generations of seniors and making the Foundation more visible to the community are important opportunities. Some feel that reaching out and connecting with youth could potentially help make the Foundation more visible and bring in new members so that the Foundation can adapt to the changing demographics within the Senior Center.

The foundation has a strong history of advocacy, and we recommend that it advocate for parks and recreation. Stakeholders have identified unused potential that could benefit the community at large. Younger seniors (ages 50 to 65) need to become members of the board for their voices and concerns to be heard.

“What is the Senior Center going to look like in 15 years? The Foundation can play a role in figuring out what that looks like.”

“I think there is an opportunity for more outreach and increasing visibility. New people aren’t necessarily disinterested; they just haven’t had [the Foundation] made available to them.”

Threats

Stakeholders have identified that the Foundation is struggling to find a common vision, focus, and purpose. We suggest that the Foundation establish visibility and stability. Board meetings are not currently being used to their full potential, which could cost the Senior Center resources and representatives. The absence of younger seniors (ages 50 to 65) from the board affects the longevity and long-term health of the Foundation. There was some concern about the Parks and Recreation Department’s perception of the Foundation and its purpose and function. It was expressed that perhaps the Foundation sees its purpose somewhat differently than the Parks and Recreation Department does.

“The Foundation lacks a vision.”

“We have a population of people who aren’t invested or aren’t aware [of the Foundation]. We need to find a way to show that the Foundation is an integral part of the Center.”

Organizational Analysis

The SWOT analysis process has “the potential to provide a realistic picture of the organization within the context of its regulatory and competitive environment. Its strength lies in its directness. Its weakness is in its lack of a systematic structure and the resulting possibility for analytical gaps.”¹ Acknowledging this potential for ‘analytical gaps’, the three following priorities were developed directly from the feedback collected in the SWOT interviews. We believe they are of real importance and effect the Foundation operationally.

1) Refine focus and purpose

Based on interviews conducted, one of the main findings was that people do not feel the Foundation has a clear purpose. A collectively understood purpose is essential for the Foundation to effectively follow through on its mission. It seems stakeholders understand that the Foundation exists to support the Senior Center, but it is not well understood how the Foundation should go about doing this. This leaves the stakeholders without clear direction, which affects board and member involvement, and the work that the Foundation can ultimately accomplish. Having a commonly understood purpose will unite and motivate Foundation stakeholders and provide guidance in decision-making and planning while helping the Foundation become an organization that the community wants to be involved with and support.

The Foundation has a mission, its guiding star, but we suggest that the current board determine how it will fulfill that mission. Creating a vision for the organization allows the board “to shape the enterprise’s direction and to become invested in that decision. By, in effect, elaborating on the mission statement, it enables the purpose for which the enterprise was originally established to remain relevant, contemporary and emotionally attractive.”²

2) Increase board investment and capacity

There are concerns about the capacity of the Foundation to meet the needs of the Senior Center. Currently, there seems to be a lack of understanding among board members as to what their responsibilities are. Training board members with an orientation so that they understand their role and the function of the board as a governing body is essential. Ongoing board member trainings will help members to continually increase their capacity to serve the Foundation. Additionally, board diversification can help to increase its capacity. According to Berman, “[d]iversity is the ‘root’ of credibility,” and in order to be credible, a board needs to reflect its constituency. It is also important to have a range of talents and skills to enable the board to govern the Foundation successfully. Diversity “requires a mix of gender, ethnicity, and age, as well as a balance of community interest, contacts, and life experience.”³ Adults in

1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

the “younger senior” category who might not want to join in Center activities might be interested in putting their talents and perspectives to use on the board. Similarly, there are undoubtedly Senior Center clients who have a broad array of strengths, abilities, and perspectives that the Foundation could tap into and benefit from.

3) Encourage Foundation visibility and investment of Senior Center Members

Many interviewees suggested that the lackadaisical feeling among members about the Foundation might be a result of Senior Center clients simply not being aware of the Foundation, its purpose, or its activities. Increasing client awareness of the Foundation and of all the resources and labor that go into running the Senior Center could aid in boosting investment. This lack of interest might also be partly because, the Foundation has not historically had a concrete path to follow. Without a clear direction, members might feel they have little to contribute and lose interest. A clear understanding of the Foundation’s work can help to contribute to its growth and capacity, as stated in the first finding. Once the board determines the focus and purpose of the Foundation, the organization can communicate this direction to Senior Center members.

Recommendations

In this section, we outline the immediate operational plan that is intended to address the key findings above. These recommendations are presented in order of high to low priority, but this plan is not meant to be definitive. Instead, it can be reworked and adapted to suit the needs of the Foundation as board members see fit. The point of this plan is to make suggestions and guide the organization in addressing these immediate concerns, not to tell the organization explicitly how to address the identified concerns.

1) Board Member Development and Future Direction - High Priority

1. Restructure Board Meetings

Board meetings are currently being used as a feedback forum for Senior Center members, which is not an effective use of board time. To have an effective board, the board and its meetings need to have an efficient structure and process. We suggest that board meetings be productive and focus on board-specific decisions and tasks. Meetings need to have written agendas and materials given to the board before the meeting. Board meetings also need to be instigated, organized, and run by board members, not city liaisons. The “sounding board” meetings can take place at another time, an idea that is addressed in recommendation two (Increase Communication and Awareness with Center Members). Devoting board meetings strictly to board activities will allow the board to focus on truly governing the Foundation. The “Committee Best Practices” document attached, while designed with committees in mind, also provides a good structure for board meetings.

2. Board Training and Development

Board members interviewed during the SWOT process were not clear on their role in the Foundation. It is vital that board members understand what duties a board member is responsible for if the Foundation is to fulfill its mission of supporting the Senior Center. Various board trainings will help board members to understand and embrace their responsibilities, creating a strong governing body for the Foundation.

We recommend that new board members be given an orientation that establishes “a baseline level of information that will help [them] to knowledgeably and confidently participate in board and committee meetings.” Other board members need continuing education opportunities to deepen their understanding of their role as board members and to increase their skills. These trainings can be provided by someone within the organization, or outside consultants can be hired.⁴ As board members gain a greater understanding of their roles, they will more effectively govern the Foundation. Remember that “[t]here is a strong correlation between good governance and effective organizations.”⁵

4 Ibid.

5 Rodriguez Heyman, Nonprofit Management

3. Determine Future Direction

Developing a purpose and direction is perhaps the most vital activity for the Foundation to undertake in the near future. As explained in the Organizational Analysis, developing a vision and direction for the Foundation will give the Foundation new life and momentum. We have included two toolkits to help board members in the refining process. The Strategic Goals Toolkit will help the board to lay out the Foundation's core purpose, goals, and objectives. The Operational Priorities Toolkit will address planning, creating a timeframe, what skills the board is missing, and what people's specific roles are. More tangible goals are made during this process. Sometime during this period of discovery and formulation, the Foundation might also want to consider some kind of Senior Center member survey to determine what members want the Senior Center to become. This will help in determining a direction for the Foundation.

2) Increase Communication and Awareness with Center Members - Medium Priority

1. Board member ambassadors

One of the responsibilities of a board member is to be an ambassador to the community. Members of the board "serve as a link between the organization and its members, stakeholders, constituents, and clients and are responsible for educating influencers and the community about the importance of the organization's work."⁶ For the Foundation, it is especially important that board members connect with Senior Center members. Not only will this increase the visibility of the Foundation, it will also create a personal connection for Senior Center members to the Foundation, building trust and familiarity.

Board members need to have a common understanding of the Foundation and its mission and purpose so that the community does not receive conflicting messages. Once the Foundation's purpose and direction has been clearly articulated and decided on, the Foundation can create a "messaging packet" for new members. This packet can include brief key messages to share with stakeholders as each board member develops their own voice. We recommend that each board member have their own "elevator speech" ready to share - a brief and succinct message about the Foundation that could be shared in the time spent waiting with someone on an elevator. It should be a minute or less.⁷

2. Meetings for Senior Center members to voice concerns

A few interviewees said they thought some Senior Center members did not attend board meetings because little was accomplished during them or they were not interested in board meetings specifically. We suggested in the previous recommendation that board meetings be restructured so that the portion of the meeting devoted to discussion and feedback with Senior Center members would be separated out. It is our hope that having

6 Berresford, "What Makes a Good Board Member?"

7 Checco, "Transforming Your Board Members into Brand Ambassadors."

meetings devoted to member discussion and feedback will encourage higher member attendance, attracting those who might want to share their thoughts but do not wish to attend a board meeting. Perhaps these could also be marketed and treated somewhat as social events to increase interest and attendance.

We encourage board members to attend these meetings, or for at least one board representative to attend. Minutes can be shared with other board members so that the Foundation is aware of current concerns and discussions among Senior Center members.

3. Use the newsletter to communicate the Foundation's purpose

As many Senior Center members do not understand or know about the Foundation, an effective way to reach some members might be through the Senior Center newsletter. We suggest devoting an upcoming newsletter to introducing and explaining the role of the Foundation. Explain that it is a separate entity from the Senior Center but that it exists to support the Senior Center. If the Foundation chooses to restructure board meetings as suggested above, this could be a good place to explain that the structure of meetings will be changing and that if people would like to share concerns or discuss Senior Center matters, there will be a separate meeting for that. Subsequent issues could update the Senior Center on what the Foundation is working on and tasks they have accomplished, such as securing grants.

3) Harness Member Talents to Increase Foundation Capacity - Medium Priority

1. Call to action: recruiting board members and volunteers to contribute talents and skills

Occasionally, boards must fill vacancies in their membership, regardless of whether the board is active or not. What we hope the Foundation realizes is that capacity building is a necessity for sustainable effectiveness. In the Foundation, the board can enhance performance by connecting organizational capacity and effectiveness.⁸ Additionally, it is important for the Foundation to realize that recruitment is an ongoing process and that like any management process, recruitment must be tended to, guided, and supported.⁹ The process of recruitment provides the board with the opportunity to build and maintain a high performing Foundation and to identify the most important skills and qualities the foundation needs. Therefore, we suggest a call to action with many Senior Center constituents to invest their time and skills in the Foundation. To do this, board members can hold an open house to explain to Senior Center members what current goals the

8 Light, Sustaining Nonprofit Performance.

9 Berman, Making a Difference: The Management and Government of Nonprofit Enterprises.

Foundation is working on or have small informational sessions explaining their needs to potential volunteers. Through this avenue, the current Foundation board members can leverage their role through their recruitment and connection with senior members.¹⁰

Further, it is important for the Foundation to seek people with divergent viewpoints. Younger seniors are a valuable demographic for the ever-changing community center. Like the elder seniors, younger seniors are a great resource for understanding the needs of their demographic within the Center. Younger seniors are also able to help grow the Foundation and keep its membership representative of the demographic it serves. This is important to note because we suggest that the Foundation reach out to “younger seniors” (ages 50 to 65) to create better representation for the Foundation while also acquiring the necessary talent and qualities.¹¹ Younger seniors utilize the Senior Center to take classes and don’t necessarily use the Senior Center the same way, but their opinions and representation matters and is relevant to the board as it is vital to properly guide the board towards its goals.

Finally, it is important to note that a system of assessment for board and volunteer skills and qualities is essential. Included in this document is an example board assessment that gives board members a snapshot of the characteristics, skills, and talents. This is a powerful tool that can not only help the board to identify the gaps, but also to give information on prospective volunteers and the capacity they can give.¹²

2. Create participant-driven board committees

Board members’ time should be used wisely, so we suggest that the Foundation’s board manage the work by creating structure to make sure that the responsibilities are fulfilled. One way to do this is for each board member to serve on at least one committee. From our analysis, we would consider the Senior Center Foundation Board a “working board,” due to its limited staff, so it is important to keep in mind that board members can reach out to non-board members for additional expertise. This can also benefit the Foundation for later recruitment of potential board members.¹³

Examples of committees that can be created are:

- Board Governance/Development committee (identifies, recruits, orients, and engages)
- Finance committee (reviews and makes recommendations on the budget before it goes to the full board, reviews financial statements, and addresses fiscal issues)
- Fundraising/development committee (oversees board’s role in fundraising)

10 Rodriguez Heyman, *Nonprofit Management 101: A Complete and Practical Guide for Leaders and Professionals*.

11 Ibid., 101.

12 Rodriguez Heyman, *Nonprofit Management 101: A Complete and Practical Guide for Leaders and Professionals*.

13 Ibid.

4) Organizational Investment and Fundraising Development - Medium Priority

1. Seek outside funding targeted toward the senior demographic

As a new organization, the Foundation may want to focus their efforts first on securing grants. This is a good way to sustain programs while building the capacity necessary to increase your donor pool. Board members are essential to the grant solicitation process. There are federal, state, and private foundation grants that support senior programs (Meals on Wheels, community planning, etc.) and we recommend that the Foundation search and apply for grants that address its needs. But to raise money through grants, board members need to be able to provide a presence to show granter program officers. This can be displayed by volunteering to be an ambassador during site visits. This shows the willingness of board members to take time out of their day, as well as a unique perspective that can be conveyed by providing their own personal touch.¹⁴ We have included information about potential grants targeted towards funding senior demographic programming on the flash drive.

2. Cultivate and tap board members that could be potential donors.

Charity begins at home. When a board member makes a financial contribution to the Foundation, they are also investing in the capacity of the organization. Best practices suggest that the initial step for fundraising is to solicit inside-out and top-down, but for a board member to give willingly is the key to successful fundraising for the Foundation. This can be written into the board agreements (board agreements are briefly explained in recommendation five). Nevertheless, 100% board participation is required before granters will consider making grants.¹⁵ Lastly, when board members contributing annually to the Foundation, the board creates a culture of philanthropy and inspires potential donors.

*Nonprofit Pro-tip: People give to strength, not to crisis “When people invest in a thriving organization they are investing with exciting plans for the future.”¹⁶

3. Work toward building a fundraising plan

From our analysis, we suggest that the Foundation board members engage in a fundraising process. Just as the Foundation’s board has oversight over finances, it has similar responsibility over the Foundation’s fundraising. We recommend that the board create a fundraising plan to prepare a two to three-year plan. Naturally, this plan would

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid.

come right after the Foundation has identified its mission, goals, and objectives.¹⁷ The design of the fundraising plan may include the following: the kinds of fundraising it undertakes (e.g. capital campaigns [raising money to fund a one-time need] or direct mailing solicitations) with corresponding goals for each; the tasks that need to be addressed for each fundraising area; and the person(s) responsible for each task.¹⁸ Fundraising is a board effort, and we recommend that all board members participate.

5) Divest Foundation from the City - Low Priority

1. Board members need to take a more direct leadership role

From our analysis, it is important for the Foundation as an organization and a board move toward leading itself. This is important for the integrity of the Foundation as well as for proper board governance. By definition, the Foundation board would be considered a “working board,” so it is recommended that the board not neglect its governance responsibilities. To address this issue, it is essential that the Foundation’s board create board job descriptions that address the responsibilities (see below), as well as board agreements for individual board members. Regarding board agreements, this is the board’s chance to be as specific as possible and to detail exact expectations for the board.¹⁹ Think about making sure that the leadership stays within the Foundation board and addresses the current needs.

Below is a list of the ten basic responsibilities of nonprofit boards:²⁰

1. Determine mission and purpose.
2. Select the executive director (not the case for the Foundation as of now).
3. Support and evaluate the executive director.
4. Ensure effective planning.
5. Monitor and strengthen programs and services.
6. Ensure adequate financial resources.
7. Protect assets and provide financial oversight.
8. Build a competent board.
9. Ensure legal and ethical integrity.
10. Enhance the organization’s public standing.

2. Work toward separating financial ties and responsibility from the city

From our analysis, we believe that it would be in the best interest of the Foundation to separate financially and managerially from the Senior Center and Parks and Recreation Department. This addresses the issue of potential conflicts of interest and the public sentiments for the Foundations duty to loyalty. This dovetails with the Foundation’s next goal of creating a fundraising plan to support the Senior Center’s needs and to maintain

17 Worth, Fundraising Principles and Practice.

18 Rodriguez Heyman, Nonprofit Management 101: A Complete and Practical Guide for Leaders and Professionals.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.

autonomy from Parks and Recreation Department. This can be achieved by recruiting individuals who have experience in fundraising in the Senior Center or working with a consultant on a plan. This issue is important because when the Foundation divests, it can recoup the public's trust and sustain relationships with future grantors and donors. We suggest that whatever financial holdings are held with the city be moved to a bank or credit union that is friendly to 501(c)3 organizations (e.g. Pacific Continental Bank, Oregon Community Credit Union, or SELCO).

Conclusion

The Senior Center Foundation is at the beginning stages of the nonprofit formation cycle. Our overall intention with this strategic plan is to guide the Foundation toward the next stages by moving it from the incubation phase to the growth phase. In its current incubation phase, board members come together and work to solve issues or develop a program for the Foundation. Decision-making is by consensus, and almost everybody is a leader with a different role. If the group needs money, it passes around the hat, has a bake sale, or uses other fundraising techniques. The entire focus of the organization is on the mission that first brought people together. People enjoy meeting each other, tasks are simple and results are tangible. ²¹

Regarding the research question, we see that the most appropriate and effective role for the Albany Senior Center Foundation is to work in a leadership role for Senior Center members as well as build capacity so they can expand towards a representative senior population. From our analysis and recommendations, we believe the objectives that are best for the Foundation to pursue will be based on their creation of the goals determined by their reenergized board membership and leadership. We hope that this leadership builds the capacity to support the Senior Center during times of change, and that as new members come in, they can guide the Senior Center toward an inclusive environment.

This strategic plan provides the goals, insight, and tools the Foundation needs to continuously support the mission, vision, and activities of the Senior Center. We hope that your Foundation flourishes and continues to support the community at the Senior Center and City of Albany for years to come.

Next Steps

After reviewing this report, we recommend that the Foundation:

1. Follow the attached Planning Toolkit.
2. Convene leadership meetings regularly to make progress within issues areas and strengthen group cohesion.
3. Share progress with members.

21 Male, "Life Cycle of Nonprofit Organization 10.09.pdf"

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Appendix A: Tool Kit:

In this portion, we are including a series of task sheets that can be used to help the Senior Center Foundation move forward on its strategic goals and operational plans. We hope that with these tools not only will there be a more focused strategic planning process, but a more concrete operational plan as well.

This toolkit is adapted from: www.sportandrecreation.tas.gov.au

Strategic Planning:

Task 1: Pre-Planning Questionnaire

Task 2: Strategic PEST

Task 3: Organization History

Task 4: Stakeholder analysis

Task 5: Do Well/Do Better

Task 6: Core Purpose

Task 7: Goals and Objectives

Operational Planning:

Task 1: Objectives and Actions

Task 2: Planning Grid

Task 3: Priorities

Task 4: Time Frame

Task 5: Resources

Task 6: Responsibilities

Strategic Goals: Task Sheet 1

Pre-Planning Questionnaire

Name and Role:

What are the strengths of the organization?

What can our organization do better?

What has happened in the past three years in the Farm to School and School Garden movement that can affect our organization?

What opportunities exist for us in the changing Farm to School and School Garden sector in Oregon?

What threats are facing us in the changing Farm to School and School Garden sector in Oregon?

Do you think we have a clear mission and vision? That is we know what the purpose of the organization (mission) and we know what we would like the organization to look like in the future (vision).

Clear Mission? YES/NO

Clear Vision? YES/NO

Write what you think the Foundation's Mission is/should be?

Write what you think the Foundation's Vision is/should be?

What successes have we achieved and what enabled us to achieve them?

What challenges have we not achieved and what prevented us from achieving them?

What is the current culture of Foundation?

What is the most important outcome you would like to achieve?

Strategic Goals: Task Sheet 2

Strategic PEST

Purpose: To consider external political, economic, social and technological (PEST) forces and trends currently affecting the organization, or which may affect the organization in the future. This allows you to understand the context of your organization and its services.

Time Limit: 45 minutes as a small group 15 minutes as a large group

Materials: Butchers paper

Task sheet 6 (one copy per group)

Steps:

1. Brainstorm external factors that are affecting the organization.
2. Sort the factors into categories of political, economic, social or technological and record them on the task sheet.
3. Double check if any external influences have been missed by cross-checking with the examples given.
4. Briefly report back to the whole group about your Findings.

Questions 3, 4 and 5 in the pre-planning questionnaire ask participants to consider opportunities, threats and changes that influence their organization. This information should be presented to this group for analysis.

Strategic Goals: Task Sheet 2

Task 2 Strategic PEST

Political	Economic
Social	Technological

Strategic Goals: Task Sheet 3

Organization History

Purpose: To understand the series of events and milestones that contributed to the organization's current position.

Time: 45 minutes as a small group 15 minutes as a large group

Materials: Task sheet 3 (one copy per group)

Steps:

1. Brainstorm significant events and milestones that contributed to the organization's current position.

2. Place these events and milestones in chronological order from the organization's inception to today on the task sheet provided.

3. Double check if any events or milestones have been overlooked by cross-checking with the sample provided and the following prompts:
 - a. when and why the organization was founded
 - b. when new programs/services were offered
 - c. when and why key policies were implemented
 - d. hosting of key events
 - e. awards/successes
 - f. key challenges

4. Briefly report back to the whole group about your findings.

Questions 7, 8 and 9 in the pre-planning questionnaire ask participants to list successes, challenges and the culture of the organization. These responses may assist with prompting discussion.

Strategic Goals: Task Sheet 3

Organization History

Where is the Foundation now? (Sample)

<p>2002 organization increases services to offer competitive participation opportunities</p>	<p>Organization founded in 2001 as other organizations in the same area were at capacity and unable to meet demand.</p>
<p>Feb 2004 Membership decline</p>	<p>2003 regular governance training introduces for all voluntary board members and key volunteers – boost in professionalism of the organization.</p>
<p>2005 Organization hosts host summits</p>	<p>August 2004 immediate funding from grant makers</p>
<p>2007 inclusion policy adopted and community engagement focus to increase use of facilities through schools.</p>	<p>2006 Increased revenue allows for paid part time manager to be appointed.</p>

Strategic Goals: Task Sheet 3

Organization History

Strategic Goals: Task Sheet 4

Task 4: Stakeholder analysis

Purpose: To identify the organization's key stakeholders. To analyze the stakeholders' core expectations of, interests in, and potential to contribute to the organization.

Time: 15 minutes as a large group

Materials: Butcher paper and task sheet 4 (one copy per group)

Steps:

1. Brainstorm a list of internal and external stakeholders. These might include state sporting organizations, members, staff, local schools, community organizations or local government.
2. List each stakeholder's interest in the organization.
3. List each stakeholder's expectations of the organization.
4. List what each stakeholder could potentially contribute to the organization.
5. Rank the stakeholders in order of their importance/influence on the organization.
6. Briefly report back to the whole group about your findings.

Strategic Goals: Task Sheet 4

Task 4: Stakeholder analysis

Added on to the Senior Center Foundation Strategic Plan

Strategic Goals: Task Sheet 5

Do Well/ Do Better

Purpose: To review what the organization does well (its strengths), and could do better on (its weaknesses).

Time: 10 minutes as a group

Materials: Butcher paper and Task sheet 5 (one copy)

Steps:

1. Brainstorm a list of areas and activities that the organization could perform better.
2. Double check the lists against key areas in the task sheet.

Questions 1, 2, 7 and 8 in the Pre-Planning Questionnaire ask participants to list the strengths, successes, challenges and things that could be done better at the organization.

This information should be presented to the full group.

Strategic Goals: Task Sheet 5

Task 5: Do Well/Do Better

Key Area	Do Well	Do Better
Participation		
Communication		
Cooperation		
Administration		
Promotion and Marketing		
Finance		

Strategic Goals: Task Sheet 6

Core Purpose

Purpose: To identify and understand the core purpose of the organization.

Time: 10 minutes as a group

Materials: Task sheet 10 (one copy)

Steps:

1. Consider the following questions.
 - Why does the organization exist?

 - How would you describe the organization to a non-member?

 - If the organization can only do a handful of things what is the most important?

 - Who does the organization serve and how does it serve them?
2. Record the responses on your task sheet. The information from these tasks may be relevant.

Organization history (task sheet 3), stakeholder analysis (task sheet 4).

Strategic Goals: Task Sheet 6

Task 6: Core Purpose

Why does the organization exist? / What does it do?

How would you describe the organization to a non-member?

If the organization can only do a handful of things, what is the most important?

Who does the organization service and how does it service them?

Strategic Goals: Task Sheet 7

Goals and Objectives

Purpose: To specify the main focus areas for the organization.

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: Task sheet 7 (one copy)

Steps:

1. Review the major goal areas that were identified at the pre-planning meeting or through the pre-planning questionnaires and what each one entails.
2. Consider whether there any major areas of the organization that have been missed and if so add them to the list of potential goals.
3. Vote for the three goals that you feel are most important for the organization to focus on for the life of the plan.
4. After voting, have a brief discussion about the goals that are definitely included and those that may be dropped due to low votes.
5. After voting check the following:
 - Do we have all the bases covered?
 - What is the main focus? / Does it align with the mission statement?
 - Where will this take us? / Does it align with the vision statement?
 - Are these the right things to focus on? / Does it align with the values statement?

Six broad areas that are commonly included in strategic goals for sports and recreation organizations are:

Participation, sport development, administration, promotions and marketing, finance, facilities and infrastructure.

These areas may be sufficient or you may want to narrow the categories. For example, governance may be a significant enough area to stand on its own rather than as a subcategory of administration, similarly events may come out of promotions and marketing.

The information from these tasks may be relevant: core purpose analysis (task sheet 6)

Question 2, 4 and 10 of the pre-planning questionnaire asks participants to describe what outcomes they would like from the planning session; this information should be shared with the group now.

Strategic Goals: Task Sheet 7

Task 7: Goals and Objectives

Vote for the three most important areas that the organization should focus on for the life of the plan

		Total

Strategic Planning: Task Sheet 8

SWOT Analysis Review

Purpose: analyze the organization's current situation in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT).

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Task sheet 16 (enlarge to 11x18 – one copy per goal)

Steps:

1. Split into groups, one group per potential goal if possible.
2. Analyze the organization's performance in the goal area and list the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of and to the organization.
3. Briefly report back to the whole group.
4. After the SWOT you should encourage discussion to come to consensus on which goals should be included in the plan and what the scope of these goals will be.

Questions 1, 2, 4 and 5 of the Pre-planning Questionnaire asks participants to list the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the organization; this information should be shared with the group now.

The information from these tasks may be relevant:

Do well/do better (task sheet 5), PEST analysis (task sheet 2)

Strategic Planning: Task Sheet 8

Example SWOT

<p>Strength</p> <p>What do we do well?</p> <p>Assets</p> <p>Why do our members come back?</p> <p>Staff/Volunteers/Members/Committees</p>	<p>Weakness</p> <p>Something we do poorly</p> <p>A disadvantage</p> <p>A lack of expertise</p> <p>What we could do better on?</p>
<p>Opportunities</p> <p>How can we create a competitive advantage?</p> <p>Where is the potential to improve/expand on?</p> <p>Partnerships</p> <p>Training</p>	<p>Threats</p> <p>Competitive Behavior</p> <p>New service and programming</p> <p>Politics</p> <p>Trends</p> <p>Demographic Changes</p>

Goal:

<p>Strengths</p>	<p>Weaknesses</p>
<p>Opportunities</p>	<p>Threats</p>

Operational Planning: Task Sheet 1

Objectives and Actions

Purpose: Develop specific statements detailing what will be accomplished in relation to each goal.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Task sheet 1 (one copy per goal)

Steps:

1. Split into groups, one group per confirmed goal if possible. Refer to task sheet 12 for the goals.
2. Review the SWOT analysis of the goal (task sheet 16).
3. Develop a specific objective in relation to the goal which does the following:
 - Capitalizes on the strengths.
 - Improves on the weaknesses.
 - Takes advantage of the opportunities.
 - Minimizes threats.

Ensure that the objective will aid in achieving the vision of the organization.

Share the objectives with the group. The information from these tasks may be relevant:

SWOT analysis (task sheet 8). If you cannot decide on one definitive objective, list all the possibilities.

Operational Planning: Task Sheet 1

Objectives and Actions

Goal:
Objectives:
Strategies:
Actions:

Objectives:

- Capitalize on strengths
- Improve on weakness
- Take advantage of opportunities
- Minimize threats

Strategies:

- Describe a course of action
- Enable achievement of objective
- Actively contribute towards the vision of the organization

Actions:

- What action or change will occur
- When it will take place, and for how long
- What resources (i.e., money, staff) are needed to carry out the change
- Communication (who should know what)

Operational Planning: Task Sheet 2

Planning Grid

Purpose:

- To recap the values statement, mission statement and vision statement from the strategic planning sessions.
- To confirm the goals and objectives.
- To introduce the planning grid as the resource for operational planning.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Task sheet 20 - planning grid (enlarge to 11x17 – one copy per goal).

Steps:

1. Review the values statement, mission statement and vision statement from the strategic planning sessions.
2. Confirm, change and/or add to the goals and objectives.

The remainder of the operational tasks will be completed on the planning grids.

The planning grids provide a simple way to record the information from the following steps.

There should be a planning grid for each goal/objective.

It is best to print/copy the sample planning grid as an 11x17 sheet.

Operational Planning: Task Sheet 2

Planning Grid

Added to the Senior Center Foundation Strategic Plan

Operational Planning: Task Sheet 3

Priorities

Purpose: To give a priority rating to each action: low, medium or high, giving an indication of which actions should be completed earlier or later in the plan.

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: Planning grids (task sheet 3)

Steps:

1. Split into groups, one group per objective if possible
2. Determine which actions require other actions to be completed first to be viable
3. Prescribe a priority rating to each action. Actions that need to be completed for other actions to take place should be awarded a higher priority than the preceding action.
4. If there are a lot of actions give each one a priority out of ten with ten being the highest and allocate L/M/H priority as follows:
 - Low: 0-4
 - Medium 5-7
 - High 8-10

The actions cannot all be high priority.

Depending on group size, groups may need to allocate priorities for two or more objectives.

Participants should add confirmed priorities to the planning grids.

Operational Planning: Task Sheet 4

Time Framing

Purpose: Describes the 'due date' for completion of each action.

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Planning grids (task sheet 2)

Steps:

1. Split participants into groups, one group per objective if possible.
2. Determine which actions require other actions to be completed before they can begin/progress.
3. Allocate a timeframe to each action (at least month and year) – remembering that the plan runs for several years and the organization needs to be realistic about its workload, especially if relying on primarily volunteer input.

It is the purpose of the plan to achieve the objective by the end of its lifespan (typically in three to five years – not the end of the current year).

Participants should complete the timeframe, resources and responsibilities tasks simultaneously.

Depending on group size, groups may need to allocate time frames, resources and responsibilities for two or more objectives.

Participants should add confirmed time frames, resources and responsibilities to the planning grids.

Operational Planning: Task Sheet 5

Resources

Purpose: To determine the resource implications: financial/material/human of each action.

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Planning grids (task sheet 2)

Steps:

1. Split into groups, one group per objective if possible.
2. Determine what resources are required for each action to be achieved. Assess the need for resources against the three categories.

Financial	Material	Human
Budget Planning	Equipment Requirements	Volunteer/Paid Position
Fundraising	Facility Requirements	Supervision
Investment	Infrastructure Requirements	Access and Equity
Sponsorship	Technology Requirements	Professional Development
Approx \$ Figure	Transport Requirements	Occupational Health and Safety

3. Allocate resources to each action and ensure that the organization has the capacity to supply/provide these resources.

Complete the timeframe, resources and responsibilities tasks simultaneously.

Depending on group size, groups may need to allocate time frames, resources and responsibilities for two or more objectives.

Add confirmed time frames, resources and responsibilities to the planning grid.

Operational Planning: Task Sheet 6

Responsibilities

Purpose: Allocate who is responsible for completing/overseeing the action

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Planning grids (task sheet 2)

Steps:

1. Split into groups, one group per objective if possible.
2. Determine who in the organization is responsible for each action.

Allocate responsibility to a particular position or committee or group/member entity rather than to a specific person. For example, give responsibility to the secretary but not to Jack Brown (the current secretary).

Be aware of overloading a particular person or volunteer, it is often the president or general manager that receives the majority of responsibilities and if one individual receives too much responsibility the work will often not be able to be completed.

Complete the timeframe, resources and responsibilities tasks simultaneously.

Depending on group size, groups may need to allocate time frames, resources and responsibilities for two or more objectives.

Add confirmed time frames, resources and responsibilities to the planning grid.

Meeting the Community's Needs through Collective Impact: An Assessment of Collaborative Potential for Parks & Recreation in Albany, Oregon



June 2017
Spring 2017 Nonprofit Consultancy
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Introduction

Parks and recreation services play a unique role within a community by acting as agents of community change. Parks and recreation departments offer a wide range of services including outdoor parks, sports facilities, and athletic programming, as well as programs promoting public health, community cohesion, youth development, and economic growth. To best leverage this unique position and mission, various organizations can come together as partners and collaborators. There are two general ways that public agencies and nonprofit organizations can work together: partnerships and collaboration. Typically one-to-one relationships are frequently project-focused or limited in scope, and really focus on how organizations can best meet their individual needs. Partnerships can be more transactional when compared to collaboration, which tends to bring together multiple stakeholders to work on more complex and broad issues facing the larger community.

The Albany Parks and Recreation Department (APRD) enlisted the help of students in the Nonprofit Consultancy course to assess their current partnerships with nonprofit and public service providers and evaluate opportunities for increased collaboration to meet the APRD's mission. Through interviews with APRD's current core partners, we identified four general areas of mutual interest that could frame a collaborative effort: 1) Promoting public health; 2) Improving engagement with Latino communities; 3) Increasing access to safe transportation; and 4) Investing in outdoor sports facilities. Based on best practices and these mutual interests, we recommend using the collective impact model to launch and structure a new effort to move the APRD from a series of one-to-one transactional partnerships to a multi-organizational collaborative effort.

Purpose of Study

The Albany Parks and Recreation Department (APRD) engaged with the Sustainable City Year Program and the Planning, Public Policy, and Management Nonprofit Consultancy course to assess their current partnerships with nonprofit and public service providers and to evaluate opportunities for increased collaboration to meet the APRD's mission. Although APRD has a wide network of partnerships in the community, we focus on four organizations that were identified by APRD as "core partners":

- Mid-Willamette Valley Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)
- Boys & Girls Club of Albany
- Greater Albany Public School District
- Community Before and After School Child Care Program (CAP).

Focusing on these core partners, we identified four goals for this project: 1) Inventory the relationships with the core partners; 2) Identify areas of mutual interest; 3) Assess potential for increased collaboration; and 4) Recommend an approach for pursuing increased collaboration.

Client Profile: Albany Parks and Recreation Department

The Albany Parks and Recreation Department's mission is to promote healthy living through recreational experiences and serve as stewards of Albany's public parks and facilities. Its recreation facilities include the Albany Community Pool, Senior Center, the Cool Pool located at Swanson Park Action Center, and 30 neighborhood and city-wide parks

including rental shelters and event space. In these outdoor facilities, APRD coordinates major annual events like River Rhythms, Festival Latino, the Children's Performing Arts Series, Summer Sounds, and the Northwest Art and Air Festival. Finally, the APRD offers over 280 activities and classes to the community, mostly in partner locations as the APRD has no indoor non-aquatic recreation facilities of its own.



The department identifies two different types of partners in the community: core partners and peripheral partners. Core partners identified by the APRD are predominately defined by facility sharing agreements that allow APRD to expand their programming, or are organizations that APRD provides other financial support or assistance to. These organizations are also best positioned to impact change because of their large presence in the community. In contrast, peripheral partners are those that utilize the APRD facilities and have a narrower mission focused on specific (athletic) activities. Peripheral partners identified by APRD include the Mid Valley Little League, American Youth Soccer Association 870, Pop Warner Football, Albany Pickleball, and the Club and Valley Velocity Track.

Methodology

The consultancy team took a qualitative research approach to this project. The team became acquainted with the field of parks and recreation and the role city departments can play in partnerships and collaboration through case studies (See Appendix for further information). In addition, a literature review of cross-sector collaboration and partnerships in the field of parks and recreation helped build understanding of leading research and best practices. Finally, a review of collaboration and partnership models was completed to understand how an increased collaborative effort in Albany might be organized. This research helped the team structure their approach and develop interview questions for the core partners. Leadership-level representatives from each of the four core partners were interviewed in-person by two members of the consultancy team from May 9th to May 19th, 2017. In addition to the interviews, the consultancy team took facility tours of the YMCA and the Boys & Girls Club.

Partnerships & Collaboration within the Parks & Recreation Field

History & Reasons for Partnerships & Collaboration

There is a long tradition of parks and recreation services being at the core of community partnerships and collaboration. Research into these dynamics dates to the early 1980s (Field & Johnson, 1983; Golding, 1984) and is a frequent topic in the *Journal of Parks & Recreation*. The National Parks and Recreation Association and others note how the parks and recreation sector is in a unique position to be a community “nexus” of early partnering efforts and, through collaborative efforts, can help in “making parks and recreation agencies heroes in their own communities” (Lehman, 2006, p. 2). Jarvi and Wagner (2001) advocate for these agencies and nonprofit organizations as “community change agents” with widely diverse community connections due to their variety of facilities and programs offered to all age groups.

There are many benefits that the parks and recreation sector and the larger community can gain through increased collaboration. First and foremost is the pragmatic recognition that in a world of limited resources, partnerships can strengthen the capacity for individual organizations to grow and achieve their missions while meeting the diverse demands of their community (Lehman, 2006; Payne, Mowen, Godbey, & Orsega-Smith, 2006). As Payne et. al (2006) notes, “Agencies in general have similar goals, so why not combine efforts to improve quality of life within the community?” Running with this visionary approach to parks and recreation, other authors emphasize the importance of centering collaboration around quality of life, and argue that partnerships and collaboration in this sector represent a “new model of community democracy” (Jarvi & Wegner, 2001, p. 22).

Types of Partnerships & Collaboration

Despite decades of research around partnerships and collaboration within the parks and recreation field, it remains difficult to categorize different types of this work because of the deeply contextual nature of these efforts, which has provided many case studies but few well-defined best practices (Uhlik, 2005). Nevertheless, there is some agreement among researchers about two general and frequently interdependent approaches to this work. Partnerships and collaboration typically fall on a spectrum of formality ranging from verbal agreements to highly structured contract-based relationships (Tyler, 2013; Vance, 2011). Although these approaches can work in isolation, research has found that good shared-governance models are more frequently built upon stakeholders working through both formal and informal agreements on common problems (Jarvi & Wegner, 2001; Payne, Mowen, Godbey, & Orsega-Smith, 2006).

One question that frequently arises in these discussions concerns the difference between partnership and collaboration. While there is no single satisfactory answer to this, partnerships are typically defined as “a dynamic relationship between two or more parties, based on satisfying mutually recognized needs” (James K. , 1999), while collaboration is a “process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem

can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible” (Gray, 1989). In general, the difference is that partnerships are typically more transactional, while collaborative efforts seek to address more complex systemic issues where no single entity can fully effect change on its own.

Partnership vs. Collaboration
Partnership: designed to satisfy mutually recognized needs
Collaboration: designed to effect change for a complex issue

Challenges with Partnerships & Collaboration

While partnerships and collaboration are undeniably beneficial to both organizations and their communities, neither are particularly easy ventures to undertake. One of the main reasons for this is the lack of shared meaning around what a partnership or collaboration, in and of itself, can be (Uhlik, 2005). As James (1999) notes, “If one stakeholder sees an alliance as a partnership while another sees it as a collaboration, the partner will be frustrated with the collaborator’s inability to see the obvious goals for the alliance, and the collaborator will be frustrated at the partner’s unwillingness to see the perspectives of others” (p. 40). Jarvi (2001) identifies four common challenges: 1) Failures to perform; 2) Inadequate commitment; 3) Insufficient return on initial investment; and 4) Failure to communicate (p. 29). James (1999) finds similar pitfalls, labeling them as slippage, disjunction, discord, and inertia. In addition to the strategies discussed below, most authors acknowledge the importance of confronting poor performance, unrealized expectations, and unfulfilling communication practices (Bartram, 2016; James K., 1999; Jarvi & Wegner, 2001).

Cross-agency collaborations can also struggle because of heavy institutional siloing and the difficulty in investing limited resources on long-term opportunities over short-term priorities (Bartram, 2016). As Mike DiBerardinis, Philadelphia’s Deputy Mayor for Environmental and Community resources comments, “It’s hard to collaborate when running a big city department” because of all the day-to-day responsibilities: “How do you lift your view up and out to possibilities of the future and bigger, more complicated policy goals?” (Bartram, 2016, p. 10). Being able to articulate a broad, long-term goal is a hallmark difference between the more transactional partnership and a true collaborative effort.

Strategies for Successful Partnerships & Collaboration

Strategies to avoid and overcome these types of common challenges fit into two broad categories: 1) Organizational dynamics; and 2) Structure. First, before fully launching either a formal partnership or collaboration, it is essential for organizations to know their organizational philosophy, needs, and ability to commit. The most productive efforts are those that began with partners coming to the table understanding their own personal,

professional, and organizational philosophy and value in collaboration (Uhlik, 2005). This should include an assessment of the organization's propensity for risk taking, leadership, and flexibility (James, 1999). Once this self-reflection is accomplished, it is important to identify the needs of the organization, the needs of prospective partners, and the needs of the larger community (James, 1999; Uhlik, 2005). This type of needs assessment can be done through joint fact finding and education, which can help a young collaborative effort to build both common understanding of the issue and a strong foundation for personal relationships (James, 1999). In terms of relationship dynamics, the less formal elements of trust, respect, rapport, and communication must act as stepping stones to good collaboration before a more formal structure can be developed (Bartram, 2016; Korfhage, 2003). Bartram (2016) notes that collaborative partners must invest in a culture that is respectful, takes the high road, and encourages transparency early in the process.

The second set of strategies moves from the goals and needs of individual organizations and the community to more formal structural dynamics that will provide support for long-term ventures. First, it is important to establish a sense of roles and leadership among collaborators. Whether or not those at the table are top management, the most effective collaborations or partnerships have clear support and buy-in from the highest levels of leadership both within nonprofit organizations and city government (Bartram, 2016; Payne, Mowen, Godbey, & Orsega-Smith, 2006). Although not a hard and fast rule, Jarvi (2001) found that in most collaborations, local government plays the role of convener, bringing together different sectors and spear-heading resource coordination, while the nonprofits involved play the role of actual service providers and change agents.

While clearly defined roles and responsibilities are integral for successful partnerships and collaboration, a solid structure is more than just clarity about who does what. A common understanding about resource sharing is equally important. When thinking about resources, it is important to appreciate different types of resources beyond just financial or physical assets. Uhlik (2005) outlines two different types of resources: 1) Universalistic or concrete resources (those with a commonly recognized value or a finite nature, such as money); and 2) Particularistic or symbolic resources (unique or invaluable resources, that can be intangible and infinite, such as a family heirloom, a niche skill, or friendship). She found that successful partnerships work to achieve a balance between these lower and higher order resources, while their unsuccessful counterparts tended to focus primarily on the universal and concrete resources (Uhlik, 2005). No matter what resources are in play, researchers note the importance of formalizing resource sharing with an MOU and documenting all types of contributions to give due recognition to contributing partners (Korfhage, 2003; Payne, Mowen, Godbey, & Orsega-Smith, 2006)

A frequently overlooked but essential element in collaborative structure is built-in feedback loops for ongoing partnership evaluation, redesign, and modification (James K., 1999; Payne, Mowen, Godbey, & Orsega-Smith, 2006; Uhlik, 2005). In collaboration, a common mantra is "go slow to go fast," and it is important for partners to recognize the different stages or phases of collaboration so as not to get frustrated or impatient with slow, deliberate action. James (1999) describes three phases: 1) Problem-setting, where a common definition of issues and needs is established; 2) Direction-setting, when ground rules, roles, and structures are defined; and 3) Implementation, when

plans and agreements are put into place. Finally, administrative support needed for these structures is too often left undefined. This can include organizational support to ensure staff continuity, a mediator or facilitator role, and streamlining actions to remove unnecessary red tape (James K., 1999). These strategies (see Figure 1) provide a strong foundation of wisdom to guide new collaborative efforts to increase likelihood of success.

Summary of Strategies for Success
1. Know your own organizational philosophy, needs, ability to commit.
2. Understand the needs of the community.
3. Build trust and relationships.
4. Establish roles and responsibilities.
5. Develop resource sharing and investment expectations.
6. Build-in feedback loops.
7. Be willing to be patient.
8. Invest in process and administrative support.

Figure 1: Collaboration strategies

A New Approach to Collaboration: The Collective Impact Model

As Christens and Inzeo (2015) note, “when used as a strategy, collaboration has been more of a paradigm than a specific conceptual framework” (p. 425). Given the highly contextual nature of collaboration, it is of little surprise that numerous approaches can provide a framework for these general strategies. Some of these include networks, coalitions, and multi-stakeholder initiatives, all of which attempt to create some type of “superstructure that is greater than the sum of its parts” (Foster- Fishman, Salem, Allen, & Fahrback, 2001; OHHC, 2016; Vendeventer & Mandell, 2011; Christens & Inzeo, 2015, p. 422). In 2011, in an attempt to better define an approach to social sector collaboration, Stanford Social Innovation Review researchers John Kania and Mark Kramer introduced the collective impact model. It defines collective impact as “the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem” (Kania & Kramer, 2011, p. 11).

The collective impact model represents a distinct approach by articulating a five-condition framework for collaborative success: 1) Common agenda; 2) Shared measurement systems; 3) Mutually reinforcing activities; 4) Continuous communication; and 5) A backbone support. Proponents of the model believe that these conditions (see Figure 2) offer a more robust and realistic approach to addressing complex social problems, especially in comparison to the “isolated impact” efforts of an individually scaled-up organization, a loose collaboration, or more transactional partnerships

(Hanleybrown, Kania, & Kramer, 2012). With all collaboration, it is essential that the targeted problem fits the approach, but for organizations who want to work more intentionally across organizational and sector divides on large, complex social issues the collective impact model represents an exciting, relatively straight-forward, and increasingly proven approach.

Five Conditions of Collective Impact	
Common Agenda	Participants share a vision for change that includes a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving the problem through agreed-upon actions.
Shared Measurement	Participants agree on the ways success will be measured and reported, including a list of common indicators identified to improve the effort.
Mutually Reinforcing Activities	Participant activities are leveraged as a set of differentiated activities coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.
Continuous Communication	Participants engage in frequent and structured open communication to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and create common motivation.
Backbone Support	Participants invest in staff and systems to provide ongoing support to convene and coordinate collective impact efforts.

Figure 2: The five conditions that make the collective impact model a straight-forward and effective approach to multi-sector collaboration

Inventory of Core Partnerships

To inventory our core partnerships, we interviewed the leaders of Albany Parks and Recreation Department and the four core partners. We focused on understanding their mission, current relationship with APRD, and any opportunities for mutual interests. A table summarizing the partners' interests is included at the end of this section (see Figure 3).

Albany Parks and Recreation Department

In this section, we focus on APRD's interests in initiating this project and how their approach can further collaborative potential. APRD initiated this project to better meet the collective needs of the Albany community by assessing and improving the relationships with their partners. To this end, APRD is interested in moving beyond project-based and transactional partnerships to a more ongoing sustained collaborative approach. In addition, they wish to help the community shift from a mindset of scarcity to one of abundance. Finally, as a city department, APRD has a unique perspective on their role in that they wish to act primarily as a service broker to steward and support diverse, quality community services, but not necessarily act as the primary service provider. This approach to delivering city services puts APRD in an ideal position to serve as a convener of collaboration.

Mid-Willamette Valley YMCA

The Young Men's Christian Association's (YMCA) mission is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all. YMCA is a membership-based organization that offers its 21,000 members services for healthy living, youth development, social responsibility, and a wide variety of facilities and programs. The APRD and YMCA have developed a positive, although limited relationship by collaborating on programs and facilities inclusive of people with disabilities. The organization shared its enthusiasm for further collaboration, especially on subjects related to outdoor sports facilities, medical facilities, affordable housing, childcare, and after-school programs. YMCA's other community partnerships include the Chamber of Commerce and United Way.



The Community Before and After School Child Care Program

The Community Before and After School Child Care Program's (CAP) mission is to provide safe, structured, quality and affordable care for elementary age children. CAP serves children 5 to 12 years in age, from all 15 elementary schools in Albany, at seven elementary school sites. The organization offers childcare before and after school and all day during summer and winter



breaks. While CAP has developed a positive relationship with the APRD through their support of summer transportation options, most of their partnership support comes directly from the Greater Albany Public School District (GAPS), which provides funding and facilities. The organization shared its enthusiasm to have further collaborations, especially on subjects related to summer program coordination, bilingual staff and outreach to Latino community, and increased access to facilities and transportation. In addition to its close partnership with GAPS, CAP has a financial partnership with the City of Albany, providing 42% of the program's non-tuition revenue. Finally, CAP is currently investigating a potential partnership with the YMCA to assist in their after-school efforts.

Boys & Girls Club of Albany

The Boys & Girls Club of Albany's mission is to provide a fun, safe, supervised environment for recreational and educational activities where all boys and girls, especially those who need us the



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF ALBANY**

most, can develop self-esteem and other qualities needed to become caring, responsible citizens. The Boys & Girls Club is a membership-based organization serving over 600 youth a day in a wide variety of facilities with programming including education, physical exercise, artistic activities, healthy living, and career skill-building. The Boys & Girls Club and APRD have a largely transactional relationship after APRD donated \$450,000 to the Club's \$8 million capital campaign in 2012. Because of this donation, APRD enjoys "priority use" of the facilities for the next 25 years. Some disagreements have arisen over this agreement, and challenges around facility coordination continue to arise. Despite these difficulties, the Boys & Girls Club shared its willingness to work on this relationship and explore new opportunities for greater collaboration to better serve the Albany community. Specifically, they are interested in addressing opportunities to improve outreach to Latino communities, increase transportation options, and improve youth access to health programs, such as the dental clinic they currently operate. The Boys & Girls Club's other partnerships include the Greater Albany Public School District, Family Tree Relief Nursery, and Samaritan Health Services.

Greater Albany Public Schools District

The Greater Albany Public Schools District's (GAPS) core purpose is to educate and inspire all students to reach their full potential, equipped to be positive, contributing members of society. GAPS is comprised of 15 elementary schools, four middle schools, and three high schools. Each of these sites has various outdoor and indoor facilities that support a range of programs. With the passage of Measure 22-165, a \$159 million bond measure, GAPS has begun planning a multi-year effort to renovate and expand its facilities.



**GREATER ALBANY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Additionally, GAPS operates a “Welcome Center” offering activities and translation assistance for Spanish speaking families in the community. GAPS has a limited and largely informal relationship with APRD apart from an agreement for priority use of a new gymnasium and track at Timber Ridge School, made possible by a donation that supported building these facilities. Of the four core partners, GAPS is the least enthusiastic about multi-stakeholder collaboration. However, opportunities to improve access to health services, specifically mental health services and increased coordination of outreach to Latino communities, could encourage their participation in a collaborative effort. As the only public school district in Albany, GAPS has robust partnerships and collaborations with numerous stakeholders, including CAP, Boys & Girls Club, and Samaritan Health Services.

Summary of Core Partner Interests			
	Relationship with APRD	Interests	Willing to Collaborate
APRD	--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Act as a service broker to meet the community's needs and their mission of promoting healthy living and stewarding Albany's public parks and facilities. 	Yes
YMCA	Positive, but limited; project-based.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing outdoor sports facilities Offering after school services Coordinating transportation options for students Offering medical services 	Yes
CAP	Positive, but limited; funding and logistical support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving access to facilities Increasing transportation options for students Streamlining summer camp programming Improving engagement with and services for the Latino Community 	Yes
Boys & Girls Club	Neutral with some tension; transactional around facility sharing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing outdoor sports facilities Improving engagement with and services for the latino community Increasing transportation options for students Improving access to health care and offering medical services 	Yes
GAPS	Positive, but limited; transactional around facility sharing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving mental health services for students Increasing coordination of outreach efforts to the latino community 	Potentially

Figure 3: The relationship, interests, and willingness to collaborate of APRD and their four core partners

Overall Findings

Based on our interviews with core partners, we concluded that most of these relationships are primarily transactional and/or project-based. Overall these partnerships have served both APRD and their partners well, but there are opportunities to strengthen these one-to-one partnerships. For example, improving coordination of summer camp activities between APRD and CAP could both help improve program offerings and reduce duplicative efforts. Likewise, there is a need for APRD and Boys & Girls Club to invest in relationship-building to improve facility coordination.

Despite this history of transactional partnerships, we find that most partners are interested in exploring more robust multi-stakeholder collaboration to better meet the needs of their own organization and the community. The Boys & Girls Club, CAP, and YMCA all expressed a willingness to explore collaborative opportunities. It is important to note that these organizations felt that any successful collaboration effort would need to be initiated and convened by APRD. Finally, with the goal of moving from transactional partnerships to multi-stakeholder collaboration, we identified four large areas of mutual interest that could provide the necessary framing for a collaborative effort: promoting public health, improving engagement with Latino communities, increasing access to safe transportation, and investing in outdoor sports facilities.



Public health services



Transportation options



Outreach & engagement with Latino community



Outdoor sports facilities

Identified Areas of Mutual Interest

We sought to identify each organization's interests and/or needs, paying particular attention to any overlap that could form a foundation for increased collaboration. Areas of mutual interest, also called zones of agreement, are essential for any approach to collaboration and are particularly important under the collective impact framework, given its focus on a common agenda. Building a common agenda on mutual interests ensures that efforts and activities in the collaboration align with both organization and community goals. In our interviews, we identified four potential areas of mutual interest to guide future collaboration.

Promoting Public Health

Our research into the collaborative potential between APRD and core partners reveals interests aligned around promoting public health, both physical and mental. For example, the Boys & Girls Club, through its dental clinic, has already recognized the importance of offering health services along with youth recreation. In addition, YMCA is interested in repurposing newly acquired facilities on their complex to provide community health services. CAP also shares a commitment to developing healthy activities, encouraging healthy eating, and providing for special needs students through after-school programming. Finally, GAPS recognizes the impact that unmet mental health needs has on their ability to effectively educate

students. These interests and concerns fit nicely with APRD's mission to promote healthy living through parks and recreation services. Programs and facilities provided by these five organizations already promote physical exercise, stress relief, and healthy living education, and could be a foundation to further expand more direct and intentional health services. In addition to APRD and the four core partners examined in this study, we would recommend that Samaritan Health Services be included in efforts to improve the public health of Albany.

Parks and recreation have long been connected with public health, as these agencies assume multiple responsibilities that play significant roles in the health of their communities: providing parks and open public spaces, protecting air and water quality, and delivering recreational services that support physical activity and healthy lifestyles. In the last decade, there has been increased awareness that these activities align significantly with broader public health goals (Dolesh & Bashir, 2016). With an emphasis on collaboration, understanding mutual interests, and a sharing of information, the goals of public health and parks and recreation departments "can be leveraged to make both more effective" (Merriam, 2016).

Improving Engagement with Latino Communities

Since 2000, the Latino population of Albany has grown by over 170%, markedly higher than Albany's total population growth of 27%. In 2013, the Latino population of Albany accounted for 13% of the city's total population (city data, 2017). This growth over the past sixteen years has led to increased awareness of this population's needs. GAPS, APRD, and Boys & Girls Club each provide services specifically for the Latino community. APRD hosts an annual Festival Latino, to invite the greater Albany community to experience Latino heritage and culture, while the Boys & Girls Club offers occasional family nights specific to Latino families. GAPS offers the most robust Latino-centered service with their Welcome Center, which aims to close the equity gap in the district and connect all families to their schools and their children's education (GAPSD, January 2016). Addressing the needs of the Latino community has come to light as a mutual interest among the partners in this report. According to GAPS' January 2016 board meeting minutes, the Welcome Center staff identified that the number of Spanish-speaking staff was insufficient to meet the needs of the community (GAPSD, January 2016). In addition, there is a lack of access to recreational facilities. Research has shown that minority youth are more likely to live in low-income neighborhoods and are less likely to have easy access to sites encouraging physical activity, such as parks, schoolyards, local gyms, or community centers (Romero, 2005). Increasing access to recreational facilities can increase engagement with the Latino community. For example, a study of rural Latino youth and park use found that public parks and recreation facilities are more used when they are of better quality, as well as demonstrating a direct relationship between organized activities and park use by Latino youth (Perry, 2011). The study also shows that participation in after school activities, or in organized team sports, were associated with greater levels of vigorous physical activity among low income and Latino teens (Perry, p. 393). Building the capacity of local Latino community members to engage in the community and to receive similar access to parks, facilities and services, is a shared goal that the partners in this study can address collectively.

Increasing Access to Safe Transportation

A number of APRD's key partners expressed concern about safe transportation for Albany youth participating in after-school programs. Currently, a shuttle service between the public schools and the Boys & Girls Club is provided by the school district. While this gives youth a safe ride to one after-school program, there is a lack of safe transport home in the evenings. This lack of transportation especially impacts lower-income youth, whose parents may have irregular working hours or simply do not own a vehicle. The YMCA currently does not have any kind of transportation service available to youth coming from school, or needing a ride home. The need for this has been expressed by the YMCA, and the Boys & Girls Club would like to improve their current situation. Similarly, CAP has needed transport for their summer camp programs, their largest cost, and would like to explore more permanent opportunities for transportation. Even though APRD and GAPS' own needs are met concerning transportation, ultimately, it is in the best interest of all partner organizations that the youth of Albany are receiving safe transportation throughout the day, so they can partake in the educational and recreational activities made available by these organizations.

Investing in Outdoor Facilities

Building and updating recreational facilities is an ongoing conversation among APRD's partner organizations, with many areas for potential collaboration. For example, the Boys & Girls Club has expressed a need for baseball fields while the YMCA similarly needs ball parks and outdoor spaces. These resources would greatly expand the services of both organizations and each has expressed enthusiasm about collaborating on such projects. CAP would like to expand their summer camp's outdoor offerings, getting better access to greenspace and the local pool. While the passing of the recent bond measure gives GAPS great opportunities to update their schools, many of the building additions will reduce available green space, potentially requiring them to need shared outdoor spaces in the future. Through our interviews we have learned that APRD has expressed in the past a vision of an all-weather sports complex for the community. An opportunity for these partners to share their needs, as described above, can result in renewed enthusiasm to realize some of these goals.

Public recreation facilities provide a wide range of benefits to the community it serves, supporting individuals as well as groups and organizations that access these resources. These facilities also have an opportunity to serve as points of pride within a community. Collaboration around the creation of such resources helps increase the sense of ownership among a community, increasing much needed generosity towards the project, and helping to ensure the needs of an entire community are met.

A notable example comes from a successful collaboration between the Minneapolis (Minnesota) Parks and Recreation Department and its local partners. What was originally a \$300,000 parks improvement project became a 7,000 square foot community recreation center costing over \$2.75 million. When Parks and Recreation reached out to community members, they found the need for something more substantial, including "an indoor gym and playspace to accommodate use by multiple age groups

in the neighborhood” (Project for Public Spaces, 2009), but they did not have the funds needed for that kind of project nor the ability to manage the facility. The Boys and Girls Club of Minneapolis expressed strong interest in the project and agreed to help raise funds and serve as the principal manager of the site. With additional support from local neighborhood organizations and individuals, the campaign met its goal through grants and fundraising. The success of this project speaks to the impact made possible with shared resources and a common agenda to meet the needs of the community, even when that goes beyond the needs or means of an individual organization.

Recommendations

Based on identified areas of mutual interest and the willingness of core partners to come to the table to explore collaborative potential, we recommend that the Albany Parks and Recreation Department move forward with convening a multi-stakeholder collaboration. To do this we recommend that they adopt an overarching collective impact approach. Building from this model, we make six specific recommendations. Five of these are based on the five core elements of collective impact (see Figure 4), along with a preparatory recommendation to launch an initiate action phase with the support of neutral facilitation.



Figure 4: The five conditions of the collective impact model

Recommendation #1: Initiate Action Phase with Neutral Facilitation

We recommend that Albany Parks and Recreation Department take the lead on convening an initiate action phase to explore collaborative potential with at least these four core partners. Depending on early discussions of mutual interests and community needs, it would likely be advisable to invite additional stakeholders to the table, such as Samaritan Health Services if a focus on public health is adopted, or groups working with the Latino community if this becomes the common agenda. A facilitator with experience in multi-stakeholder processes and preferably awareness of the collective impact model should be brought on early in the planning of this phase. Although APRD will likely need to invest in this individual or firm initially, it is important that the facilitator be seen as objective and as the process moves forward other participants may share the cost burden as appropriate for their budget. Costs do not need to be shared equally for buy-in and shared ownership to be promoted through shared investment in the process (Carlson, 2007). Additional staff capacity considerations include internal communication and the role of data, as data gathering will be key during this phase. APRD should be prepared for collection, organization, storage, and dissemination of potentially large amounts of information. Finally, group memory (such as meeting minutes and initial governance documents) needs to be stored or disseminated in ways that allow equal access by all participants.

As discussed in the literature review, it is essential that collaborative participants recognize that collaboration is a deliberate action that moves forward through different stages. Although there are many different breakdowns of this life cycle of collaboration, most authors agree that the initial phase is one of convening, assessing needs, articulating the problems to be addressed, and clarifying shared goals (James, 1999; Payne, Mowen, Godbey, & Orsega-Smith, 2006; Uhlik, 2005). In the collective impact model, the collaborative process is divided into three phases (see Figure 5), the first of which is called the Initiate Action phase. During this phase, participants seeks to

understand the landscape of the situation in terms of both key players and existing work underway, as well as to establish baseline data to develop the case for change (Hanleybrown, Kania, & Kramer, 2012). Although it can be tempting to want to get into writing specific roles, responsibilities, and decision-making systems, and while well-defined structure is integral to long-term success, this initiate action phase is better served by temporary governance agreements that allow participants to more freely explore their interests, develop informal relationships, and think more creatively about goals and strategies. In an article about essential mindset shifts for collective impact, authors note the “power of collective impact comes from enabling collective seeing, learning, and doing,” rather than setting out and following a linear plan (Kania, Hanleybrown, & Juster, 2012, p. 4). Finally, it is essential during this step to identify and cultivate “champions,” described in the literature as individuals who “[command] the respect necessary to bring CEO-level cross-sector leaders together and keep their engagement over time” (Hanleybrown, Kania, & Kramer, 2012).

Phases of Collective Impact			
Components for Success	Phase 1: Initiate Action	Phase 2: Organize for Impact	Phase 3: Sustain Action and Impact
Governance and Infrastructure	Identify champions and form cross-sector group		Facilitate and refine
Strategic Planning	Map the landscape and use data to make case for change	Create common agenda (goals and strategy)	Support implementation (alignment to goals and strategies)
Community Involvement	Facilitate community outreach	Engage community and build public will	Continue engagement and conduct advocacy
Evaluation and Improvement	Analyze baseline data to identify key issues and gaps	Establish shared metrics (indicators, measurements, and approach)	Collect, track, and report progress (feedback process to learn and improve)

Figure 5: Phases of collective impact model with components for success (Hanleyman et. al.)

To support the initiate action phase, we recommend employing the use of a group facilitator to provide necessary process design and in-person facilitation services. A forum dedicated to collective impact work in Australia defines facilitation as “the art and science of structuring social interaction to achieve group goals” (James T. , 2014). Facilitators accomplish their work by both designing group processes and by moderating group dialogue during in-person meetings, where they help to not only make working sessions productive, but also can be essential for resolving conflict, exploring interests, and helping draw out participation for all involved (CLN, 2017). In addition, it is common for collective impact and other collaborative process facilitators to serve

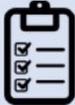
in project management and internal communication roles, where they take the lead in ensuring that timelines are met, information is distributed, and group memory is retained. A facilitator should not be brought in just for the first launch meeting. They will serve the effort best by being brought in early to help with preliminary discussions and case development, as one guide to collaborative governance notes: “The activities undertaken before discussions begin are critically important to the success of any collaborative process and deserve as much attention as conducting the process” (Carlson, 2007, p. 25). Finally, two perennial questions asked about facilitation for collaborative processes are whether or not the convener can be the facilitator, and if the facilitator should be an “insider” or an “outsider.” While there are benefits to the facilitator being either the convener or another participant, such as high level of content knowledge, familiarity with parties, potential authority to invite participants, and maybe even financial or time savings in contracting, best practices overall suggest that an outside, neutral facilitator will multiply the value of the role dramatically (CLN, 2017). An outside facilitator brings not only objectivity and is free of any outcome preferences, but also can bring both validity and mediation skills to processes with historical baggage between participants or complex funder relationships (Carlson, 2007; James T., 2014).

Recommendation #2: Adopt an Aspirational Common Agenda

Aspirational goals are considered key for encouraging collaboration. Thus, we recommend that an initiate action phase for APRD and the four core partners be framed not in terms of facility coordination as it has been in the past, but rather through a broader view of how parks, recreation, and youth development activities can impact the physical and social well-being of the Albany community. Promoting public health seems to be a natural fit for these organizations, especially under the convening effort of the APRD. In addition, social capital could be a valuable framing for these efforts, particularly in terms of improving outreach to diverse communities and promoting equity within Albany. Social capital can be defined as “the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 119). Building on Robert Putnam’s seminal work *Bowling Alone* (2000), Jarvi & Wegner note how the role of parks and recreation activities can transcend social barriers to reconnect us with our friends and neighbors to build much-needed social capital within our communities (2001). Whether framed in terms of public health, social capital, or something else equally aspirational, these types of goals will enliven a collaborative effort in Albany and create the common agenda necessary for successful collective impact.

Common Agenda

Participants share a vision for change that includes a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving the problem through agreed-upon actions.

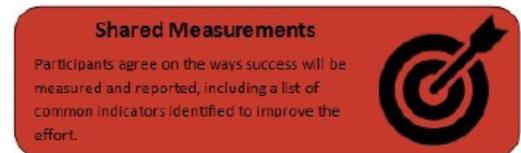


A common strategy to encourage success with collaborative efforts is to adopt aspirational goals and not rush the process of achieving those goals. Participants need not shy away from big goals and lofty aspirations, in fact, big goals inspire rather than deter collaboration. As Mark Focht, First Deputy Commissioner of Parks and Facilities in Philadelphia notes: “The key is finding something that is aspirational but not silly, it pushes you and it also pushes funding because it’s exciting” (Bartram, 2016, p.

11). Part of this is a paradigm shift for organizations to see the whole community as their constituents, not just their more traditional client demographics (Bartram, 2016). Because these goals are not minimal, low hanging fruit, and because they are aiming to address the full community's needs, it is important for collaborators to understand early on that they must "go slow to go fast." Bartram (2016) notes that groups need to be willing to take risks and understand that sometimes it takes two steps backward to move five steps forward. Moreover, she notes that collaborations must take the long view by developing "program that will extend well into the future and past the next election cycle" (Bartram, 2016, p. 10). Finally, James (1999) warns that "rushing the process increases the likelihood that the partnership will dissolve" (p. 45).

Recommendation #3: Develop Shared Measurements

Without agreement on how to measure and report success, a common agenda can create little lasting impact. Aligning data measurements and collection guarantees that each organization remains accountable, that progress is tracked towards a shared goal, and that quality and credible results will be generated (Kania & Kramer, 2011). In order to implement shared measurements, APRD and partnering organizations need to design and develop four key initial steps: 1) Create a shared vision for the system to accomplish the goals of the common agenda; 2) Identify what measurements are already implemented and work to identify success in areas of common interest; 3) Establish governance and organization for structured participation; 4) Identify metrics, data collection practices, and approach to transparency (Kramer, Parkhurst, & Vaidyanathan, 2009).



The development of shared measurements must be tailored to each collaboration. For APRD and partnering organizations, key measurements will be based on the common agenda and goals established. For example, if public health is chosen then measurements could be developed around service access, demand, population served, and even health indicators such as childhood obesity. For a common agenda built around engagement with the Latino community, collaborating organization could develop a common demographic survey to accompany program enrollment to track the number of individuals from this community participating in parks and recreation programming. Additional measurements could be around availability of bilingual staff and translated materials. Regardless of the specific goals or agenda, it is essential that the collaboration develop ways to collect, track, and analyze their identified shared measurements that are both inexpensive and appropriate for the scale and phase of the collective impact effort. At the beginning of a collaboration, most participants start with monthly check-ins at meetings and shared participatory evaluation components (Food, Lavery, & Falabe., 2015). When the collaboration is proven successful or if the investment in the collaboration allows for a more formal evaluation system, the organizations can use market data systems to measure performance. These data systems must be shared measurable platforms that allow collaborations to set measures within their areas of mutual interest, preferably using web-based tools that enable the collection, analysis, and reporting of shared data. The last step of the collaborative

process is identifying ways to improve the measuring and reporting of their effort's impact in the community through adaptive learning. No matter the scale or phase, participating organizations need to have common evaluation tools such as surveys, qualitative interview scripts, and data access to track outcomes (Amed & Patti-Jean Naylor, 2015).

Recommendation #4: Leverage Mutually Reinforcing Activities

Even with the use of shared measurements, it is difficult for any one organization to make meaningful progress on a complex social issue. Rather, mutually reinforcing activities from the collaborators creates the synergy needed to make collective impact and effect change. Each organization does not have to do the same work or shift their own mission, but can rather reinforce the common agenda by taking on complementary activities that build on the strengths of each organization (Henne, 2014; Collaboration for Impact, n.d.). This approach opens up the potential to leverage resources towards newly identified mutual interests and the common agenda.

Mutually Reinforcing Activities

Participant activities are leveraged as a set of differentiated activities coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.



APRD, now aware of some mutual interests identified in our interviews, and well positioned to be the convener of a new collaborative effort, can bring together these organizations to build on the strengths of their existing activities and unique approaches to serving the Albany community. For example, GAPS's robust transportation resources, APRD's wealth of outdoor spaces, and the Boys & Girls Club's successful dental program and partnerships with health providers, such as Samaritan Health Services. By framing conversations of these assets around mutual interests, the collaborating organizations will be able to leverage their work, identify opportunities for new programming, and reduce duplicative efforts (Edmondson & Hecht, 2014). In this regard, there will be less need for organizations to compete for resources and attention from the same audiences (Boyle & Irby, 2014). By working together, partners can more efficiently manage their current assets, and connect community members to a range of diverse and quality opportunities offered throughout the city.

Recommendation #5: Improve Continuous Communication

Currently APRD and their core partners communicate sporadically and informally, with no more than one partner present at a time. For a collaboration based on collective impact to succeed, more regular communication practices will need to be developed.

While informal communication is certainly important for building the necessary trust and interpersonal relationships, it must be balanced with more formal and structured channels of communication. Strategies for internal communication can include the use of online platforms, face-to-face meetings, annual retreats, and systems for regularly reporting metrics. As the collaboration evolves, so too can the communication. Regardless of the format, duration, or frequency, "it is important for all partners to have

Continuous Communication

Participants engage in frequent and structured open communication to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and create common motivation.

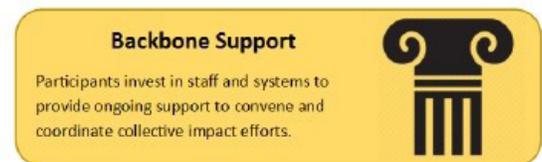


equal representation and involvement in all interactions, to ensure that decision-making is collaborative and takes into account all members' point of view" (Collaboration for Impact, 2013). In addition to internal communication among the participants, agreement and strategies should be developed for how the collaboration externally communicates their efforts. Ultimately, improving communication and adopting a collective impact approach is about "changing the way organizations and individuals interact with each other and approach complex problem-solving which is an important, if often implicit, goal" (Parkhurst & Preskill, 2014, p. 18).

Recommendation #6: APRD Provide Backbone Support

A backbone organization or backbone support provides overall strategic coherence; administrative support for both daily operations and implementation; such as overseeing stakeholder engagement; meeting management; communications; and data collection and analysis

(Collective Impact Forum, 2015). The four core partners suggested that APRD can and should play the role of a convener for a new collaborative effort, and we propose that if these efforts make it past the initiate action phase then APRD should take the lead in providing backbone support for the collective impact group. Backbone support can range from a small investment of staff time within an existing collaborating organization to the development or contracting with an outside firm fully dedicated to providing necessary support, which can be common for large efforts or those funded by a major foundation (Jones-Romansic, 2016). Likely this level of investment is not necessary for a parks and recreation collaboration in Albany. Rather the services of a facilitator and minimal time from existing APRD staff to manage internal communications, meeting coordination, and data collection should be plenty to help get these efforts off the ground. Once the collaboration grows, becoming potentially more complex with additional stakeholders or activities, then it could be helpful to create a communication or collective impact coordinator position, which could be similar to the new position recommended by SCYP Business class students who worked on an Albany Sports Facility Collaboration Strategic Business Plan (Peterson, Shaw, Palodichuk, Millar, & Li, 2017).



In an attempt to better understand the workings of backbone organizations, the Foundation Strategy Group (FSG) worked with the Greater Cincinnati Foundation to evaluate six backbone efforts in Ohio where collaboration has become the "new normal" for government-nonprofit partnerships at local and state levels (Turner, Merchant, Kania, & Martin, 2012). This research effort found that there are six common activities that backbone staff or organizations provide over an initiative's lifecycle:

1. Guiding vision and strategy
2. Supporting aligned activities
3. Establishing shared measurement practices
4. Building public will
5. Advancing policy
6. Mobilizing funding (Turner, Merchant, Kania, & Martin, 2012)

Setting goals, measuring outcomes, and adapting efforts are at the heart of the collective impact model, and also serves as guiding wisdom for backbone support. In contrast to other collaborative frameworks, demonstrating measurable value is extremely important to the collective impact model, both in terms of outcomes and process. Thus, researchers asked stakeholders to complete the sentence, “If not for x backbone organization, y, z would not have happened” (Turner, Merchant, Kania, & Martin, 2012, p. 5). Through interviews and surveys, the researchers identified a series of expected short-term and intermediate outcomes that can provide benchmarks for evaluating and improving the collective impact process and associated backbone support efforts (see Figure 6). APRD can use these findings to help identify and develop the needed backbone resources to support a collaborative effort.

Activity	Short-Term Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes
Vision & Strategy	Partners share a common understanding of the need and desired result	Partners’ Individual focus is increasingly aligned with the initiative’s common agenda
Support aligned activities	Partners increasingly communicate and coordinate their activities toward common goals	Partners increasingly use data to adapt and refine their strategies
Establish shared measurement practices	Partners understand the value of sharing data	Partners increasingly use data to adapt and refine their strategies
Build public will	Vision and strategy	More community members feel empowered to take action on the issue(s)
Advance policy	Partners increasingly communicate and coordinate their activities toward common goals	Policy changes increasingly occur in line with initiative goals
Mobilize funding	Funding is secured to support initiative activities	Philanthropic and public funds are increasingly aligned with initiative goals

Figure 6: Activities and illustrative short-term and intermediate outcomes from backbone support (Turner et. al, 2012)

Conclusion: Opportunities beyond Parks & Recreation

Public-nonprofit partnerships are a very common way that local governments meet their community's needs. Certainly, the APRD has been able to expand their programming while also supporting the mission of their partners for many years now. However, a practice of transactional partnerships and limited communication between and among these organizations has deterred more collaborative efforts to recognize their deeper mutual interests and to effect broad change in the Albany community. We found that four areas of mutual interest are ripe for collaborative conversation: public health services, transportation coordination, outreach and engagement with the Latino community, and investment in outdoor sports facilities. Through six specific recommendations, we encourage the APRD to invest in and launch collaborative conversations with their partners using the structure of the collective impact model. By approaching their mission in this way, the APRD can be a model for other City of Albany departments to explore how collaboration and collective impact can improve not only their work, but the health, equity, and prosperity of the whole Albany community.

Summary of Recommendations

1. Launch an Initiate Action Phase with Neutral Facilitation
2. Adopt an Aspirational Common Agenda
3. Develop Shared Measurements
4. Leverage Mutually Reinforcing Activities
5. Improve Continuous Communication
6. APRD Provide Backbone Support for Initiative

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Appendix

Information on the Collective Impact Model

The following two sites provide resource packets, case studies, and additional information on the collective impact model in action. We especially recommend the Getting Started, Stories, and Resources sections of the Collective Impact Forum, as well as the 'How To' Guide section of the Collaboration for Impact website.

<http://collectiveimpactforum.org/>

<http://www.collaborationforimpact.com/>

Sample MOU for Collaboration

The below link is a type of MOU, a Declaration of Cooperation, facilitated by Oregon Solutions to complete the Milwaukie Riverfront Park Project in harmony with several partners (public and private) invested in the park, and partners with their own projects that directly relate with the park's completion. This Declaration of Cooperation was created to help ensure a successful collaborative effort, with each partner stating their relationship to the project and what their individual commitments to the project will be.

http://orsolutions.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Milwaukie_DoC.pdf

Additional information about the project, and other projects by Oregon Solutions:

<http://orsolutions.org/osproject/city-of-milwaukie-riverfront-park>

A Collection of Successful YMCA Collaborations

This document, created by the YMCA, is a collection of successful collaborations across the United States that highlight multi-partner approaches and the leveraging of multiple resources to accomplish projects that no one organization could do alone. The document also includes a survey that details for each collaboration – who brought what to the collaboration and who gets what out of the collaboration. A useful list of external resources relating to collaborations is included at the end.

http://www.ci.snoqualmie.wa.us/DesktopModules/Bring2mind/DMX/Download.aspx?Command=Core_Download&EntryId=7967&PortalId=0&TabId=273

Strive Partnership Report

This report shares the positive outcomes in educational achievements in the Cincinnati area resulted from the collaborative efforts of multiple leaders in various sectors. The report contains useful examples of sharing goals and measurements, the alignment of resources, and sharing measurements to build a culture of continuous improvement.

<http://www.strivepartnership.org/sites/default/files/wp-content/2012-13%20Partnership%20Report.pdf>

Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation Strategic Framework for Growth: Planning for the Future



Image Courtesy of Albany Parks and Recreation

Spring 2017
Eric Braman, Justin Goettsch, Hilary Hunt, S. Aaron Weah-Weah
III

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Introduction & Organizational Overview

This report is designed as a roadmap and toolbox for the Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation (APRF) to guide leadership as APRF continues to grow. Our report synthesizes best practices in the nonprofit literature and connects these practices to APRF's future, focusing on two main goals: developing a sustainable board, and building public trust and integrity.

The Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation (APRF) is a new organization, founded in fall 2016, the purpose of which is to enhance the City of Albany's ability to provide public parks and recreational opportunities for its residents and visitors. It is organized and operated for charitable and educational purposes. APRF will support all activities of the Albany Parks and Recreation Department.

The Board of Directors is the primary governing body of APRF and its size should vary between five and fifteen board members, according to APRF bylaws. Currently, because of its immaturity, there are three board members. In addition to the board members, the leadership of APRF also includes founder Ed Hodney. Ed is the Director of Albany Parks & Recreation and was instrumental in APRF's incorporation. He has also led APRF's projects during its early phases as an organization.

Research Question

The question our group considered was the following: what structures, steps, and capacities are required for APRF to operate as a sustainable and successful nonprofit organization separate from the Albany Parks & Recreation Department? The narrative and tools of this report are designed to answer this question and provide a supportive structure so that APRF can achieve this goal.

Methodology

Over the course of ten weeks, our team employed various methodologies to complete our project, including a charter, which guided the objectives and direction of the team. The team charter also clearly defined assigned team members' tasks and agreed on leadership structure for effectiveness. Other methods employed include an assessment to ascertain the current status of the foundation, which involved meetings and verbal and written communication with the founder, in addition to evaluation of existing foundation documents, and conducting interviews with board members.

During our assessment, we were guided by the Nonprofit Lifecycle framework (Stevens, 2008), which enabled our assessment of the foundation in relation to the seven different stages of development and progress. As a team we considered the idea, start-up, growth, mature, decline, turnaround, and terminal stages of nonprofits as described by Stevens (2008). To achieve this, we carried out a diagnosis, which evaluated the foundation's overview, program, management, governance, resources, and systems. At the end of the process, our team agreed that APRF is between the idea and start-up stages, because APRF has characteristics of both. Although we were initially tasked with

creating a communications plan, the Nonprofit Lifecycle framework aided our realization that APRF instead needed a strategic plan. The strategic plan that resulted will enable APRF to complete the idea and start-up stages and begin its way to the growth stage of the nonprofit lifecycle.

As we developed tools and the guiding narrative within this report, our team reviewed the nonprofit best practices literature and examples from well-regarded nonprofit organizations. Next, we developed and adapted tools and foundational documents. These tools and documents are arranged into the following comprehensive strategic plan report to assist the foundation development process and growth.

Nonprofit Lifecycles

Nonprofit organizations experience several phases of maturity over their lifespans. As they mature, the nonprofit's capacity will increase. With this improvement, the organizations will be able to accept greater responsibility and bring in more programs. There are seven different stages that a nonprofit experiences on its path to maturity: idea, start-up, growth, maturity, decline, turnaround and terminal (Stevens, 2008). See Figure 1 for an illustration of the lifecycle stages.

Based on our research, conversations with Albany Parks & Recreation Director Ed Hodney, and board member interviews, it is the understanding of our group that APRF is between the Idea Stage and the Start-up Stage. First, there is a perceived community need, which initiated the founding of APRF. While APRF does have a board, it is not a board that will be sustainable as APRF grows and adds programs and staff. APRF also has characteristics of the start-up stage, but our findings and recommendations will be a roadmap that, if followed, should get the APRF completely into the start-up stage and begin pushing toward the growth stage.

APRF will reach the growth stage when the organization begins battling against a lack of resources and has a consistent sense of urgency because of all that needs to get done. At that point, the board will lose the characteristic of mainly loose personal connections. Board structure will be clarified, sources of income will become more complex, and accounting will be an essential organizational skillset. At this point, APRF will start to shift to the mature stage.

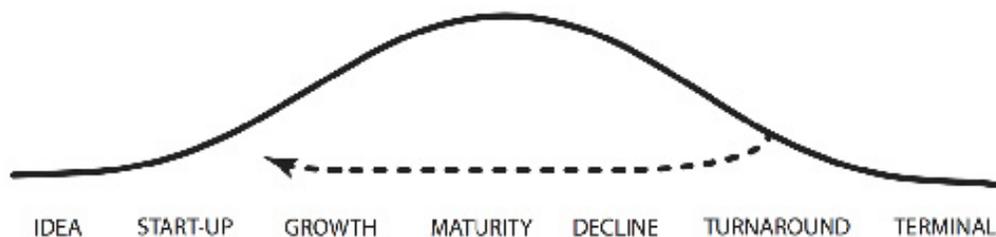


Figure 1: The Nonprofit Lifecycle Framework (Stevens, 2008).

How to Use this Report

There are two general types of documents involved in our report. The body of the report is informative and narrative-based, and shares the research-based insights that compose our recommendations. This narrative gives context about how to incorporate the tools and strategies we recommend. The references for these documents are listed throughout this narrative, but full citations and websites are listed in the References section at the end of the report.

The second type of resource provided are tools for APRF's use, largely located in the Appendices of this document. These tools are referred to throughout the narrative and referenced throughout the report. However, as these tools are examples that we have found and edited, APRF should tailor these tools as the leadership sees fit.



Image courtesy of Albany Parks and Recreation

Goal I: Develop a sustainable board

The nonprofit board holds great responsibility for the success, leadership, reputation, and operation of a nonprofit organization. This is especially true for APRF, which is still straddling the line of the idea and start-up stage of organizational development, operating with no staff and effectively no budget (Stevens, 2008). With no staff members, APRF will need to rely heavily on board members for the day-to-day functioning of the organization until the organization is able to hire staff.

Thus, the first and most critical part of this report is the need to recruit committed board members and develop current and new members' skills. The recruitment materials and strategies that follow are intended to guide this process. The authors hope that these materials will lead to future board members taking the opportunity to serve on the board seriously. It is best practice to develop and follow a detailed recruitment plan and offer official descriptions of the board member role to new recruits (Wild Apricot, 2017). The level of responsibility taken on by board members, especially on working boards, or boards in which members do the work of the organization, is serious and must be communicated with great clarity and professionalism (Pakroo, 2017). It is at this stage that the following tools and materials are most useful. These materials should be considered by the APRF Board for adoption and implementation.

Board Member Recruitment Materials

Board Member Position Description

Position descriptions for board members are a great first step in communicating the importance of board membership to interested applicants. This description should also succinctly communicate the commitment applicants will be taking on upon election to the board (Wild Apricot, 2017). It is critical that the position description not only list the "tasks" or "work" of the position, but also clarify the opportunities and benefits. Organizations should treat this document as seriously as they would the recruitment material for a professional staff position. Effective recruitment materials are an essential tool in diversifying an organizational board, an effort that will solidify APRF's transition through the Start-up State and into the Growth Stage (Stevens, 2008). The position description examples included in this report (Appendix A) have sample frameworks for developing a position description for APRF board recruitment.

Board Agreement: Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct (Appendix B) is to be signed by board members once they are voted onto the board. Once a new member has been approved to join the board, it is important to develop a formal process in which the new member acknowledges the responsibilities and values they are now committed to upholding (National Council of Nonprofits, 2010a). Board members hold major influence over the future of the nonprofit organization, have legal power and responsibility, and are accountable to the public they serve (Nonprofit Association of Oregon, 2016). Committing to uphold a formal Board Agreement or Code of Conduct at the time of application and signing this agreement at the time of their election codifies the seriousness of this responsibility.

Publicity Materials for Board Recruitment

There are many ways to garner community interest for new board member recruitment. While the personal connections and networks of the board may bring in candidates, this method is not necessarily the best way to diversify the board. This type of recruitment can sometimes lead to a cycle of identical perspectives and identities that do not represent the community or fulfill the needs of a highly functional board, thus stagnating an organization in the Start-up Stage of Nonprofit Lifecycles (Stevens, 2008).

Healthy boards possess a range of experiences, perspectives, identities, and skillsets that together provide the many tools necessary for organizational success. APRF's current board is consistent with the Idea Stage of the nonprofit lifecycle in which all board members possess a personal relationship with the organizational founder and have not yet developed a sense of organizational identity (Stevens, 2008). In order to move forward as an organization through the Start-Up and into the Growth Stage, APRF must diversify and seek outside professionals to join the team (Stevens, 2008).

For boards that are working to develop a greater range of interest and commitment from across their community, public forums are an essential tool for communication (Wild Apricot, 2017). Public forum and publicity opportunities through which the APRF can seek new board members include:

- Develop a "Join the Board" informational page on organizational website (once established)
- Add a link to the "Get Involved!" tab on the Albany Parks & Recreation website that directs visitors to a "Join the Foundation Board" informational page
- Post to the Albany Parks & Recreation Facebook and Twitter a link to a "Join the Foundation Board" informational page
- Post an ad in the Albany Democrat-Herald newspaper, or pitch the newspaper on an article profiling the new organization
- Utilize LinkedIn for Nonprofits, and execute a targeted profile search
- Post position to Idealist.org
- Write and distribute a recruitment email
- Post to community forums
- Pursue in-person recruitment

It is critical that board members assisting with recruitment have a strong grasp on the board member position description and have prepared a sales pitch for the recruitment conversation. The sales pitch can be pulled directly from the board member position description, but should also be informed by efforts and updates from the current board and the vision and strategic plan of the organization. For APRF, the current pitch may be, "We are looking for community members committed to building the framework of a new organization that will bring resources and attention to Albany Parks & Recreation. We are looking for individuals that are innovative, strategic, logistically-minded, and committed."

Bylaw Adjustment Suggestions

We suggest that the language, “Directors shall be elected during a regularly scheduled board meeting taking place in either the month of November or December,” be removed from the organizational bylaws. By limiting the board to only nominating and renewing board positions once a year, the organization puts itself in danger of being unable to fill board positions that become vacant mid-year or losing the interest and energy of prospective board members that express interest at times inconsistent with the specified election months. Instead, it is suggested the language be adjusted to the following:

“Directors shall be elected during a regularly scheduled board meeting at any time throughout the year. All potential board members must be vetted through the processes determined by the Board Recruitment Committee, be nominated by the Board Recruitment Committee, and be elected to the Board of Directors by a majority vote at a regularly scheduled board meeting. Officer positions shall be elected during a regularly scheduled board meeting taking place in either the month of November or December of each year to take on official leadership roles in January.”

This language puts greater weight on the importance of having a clear and determined process for board recruitment and vetting, allows for board recruitment and turnover to be a gradual process rather than a once-per-year dramatic shift, and creates flexibility for times of need. The leadership team, which will be voted on each year, becomes the major organizational shift that takes place at the start of each new year. It is essential that the organizational bylaws contain this specificity to ensure a consistent process for board recruitment and election (Board Effect, 2017).

This report further recommends that APRF adopt the Voting Procedures detailed in Appendix C. The current bylaws do not include detailed information for how APRF will deal with voting questions and issues, and the suggested document will guide the board members through these situations. We suggest APRF implement the whistleblower policy (Appendix D) to ensure unbiased decision-making and ethical operations on the board and in the organization.



Image Courtesy of Albany Parks and Recreation

Board Recruitment Plan

Interview Process

Once the Board Member Position Description and Code of Conduct have been finalized, it is important to confirm the screening and selection process for future board members. This process should be documented and closely followed for consistency across recruitment periods and to ensure proper vetting processes are taking place to bring only the most committed and qualified members onto the board team (Board Effect, 2017). As with any serious professional opportunity, an application should be listed alongside the position description. This application will assist the Board Recruitment Committee in assessing the qualifications of the applicant. For reference, consider the “Window of Work” application developed by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs (2016), located in Appendix E.

Following the application submission, we suggest that the candidate be vetted through the following three meetings: board recruitment committee interview, full board interview, and follow-up meeting with board chairperson.

1. BOARD RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE INTERVIEW

This interview procedure is intended to prevent wasting the time and energy of the full board in the case of an unqualified candidate. In this interview, the Board Recruitment Committee will meet with the candidate in person to ask a series of questions that have been determined as the standard set of questions. Once all questions have been asked by the committee members, the candidate should be allowed time to ask questions of the committee. We recommend using the sample interview questions provided by Jeremy Barlow with Board Effect (2016).

2. FULL BOARD INTERVIEW

Once an applicant has been screened through the Board Recruitment Committee Interview, and the Board Recruitment Committee has nominated someone to the board, the candidate should be welcomed to meet the entire board in a full board interview during a normally scheduled board meeting. At this interview the candidate will be provided the opportunity to share a little bit about themselves and then answer a series of selected questions posed by the board members (Wild Apricot, 2017).

These questions differ from those asked at the Board Recruitment Committee Interview and focus on the strengths the candidate would bring to the board. The full board interview is not the time to ask if the candidate is willing to make a financial contribution, can commit the expected time, or believes in the mission of the organization (Wild Apricot, 2017). These questions should have been answered in the initial vetting process. This interview should be designed for the board to get a sense of what working with this individual would be like and how this individual will serve the mission of APRF. Finally, this interview is also beneficial for the candidate as it allows them to get a sense of a typical board meeting.

3. FOLLOW-UP MEETING WITH BOARD CHAIRPERSON

The follow-up meeting with the Board Chairperson, who should also be serving as the head of the Board Recruitment Committee, is the time in which the candidate will either be formally asked to join the board or be notified of the board's rejection of their nomination. This meeting can take place over the phone.

If the board has voted down the candidate due to duplicate skillsets, but still believes the candidate would be a good addition at a future time, the Board Chairperson should ask the candidate if they would like to be contacted in the future when their services may be needed (Wild Apricot, 2017). In the case the candidate is offered a position to join the board, the Chairperson should provide essential information for next steps, including established onboarding procedures.

Board Recruitment Procedure

The recruitment of board members should be intentional and specific to the individual, and relevant to the needs of the organization. It prioritizes finding committed and willing members of the community that care deeply for the organizational mission, but who also bring skills, identities, and experiences that round out the board as a whole. See Appendix F for a sample Board Overview Tracker, developed by the Association of Fundraising Professionals, with a few additional elements provided by the consultancy team (Lysakowski, 2004). The APRF Board can utilize this tool to assess what type of board candidates would best serve the mission and diversification of the organization, an essential thought process for moving the organization through the Lifecycles Stages (Stevens 2008).

Goals timeline

The APRF Board, with only three official voting board members, does not have the person-power available to meet the requirements of the organizational bylaws, nor adequate person-power to facilitate the daily functioning of the foundation. In acknowledgment of the current limited resources of APRF, we suggest that the board prioritize recruitment and growth. By intentionally taking gradual steps to get to a full board, the task of becoming a sustainable organization will be more feasible.

To begin, the board needs to recruit enough members to reach the minimum five required voting members (see Figure 2). With the board below capacity, the organization should acknowledge that they remain in the organizational Idea Stage of the Nonprofit Lifecycle (Stevens, 2008). For these initial recruits, the organization should focus on finding committed members without stressing board diversity too heavily. Personal relationships with the founders and current board members for these initial recruits is reasonable and expected.

Once the board has reached the minimum capacity of five board members, it should immediately review suggested documents provided in this report and vote to implement any that the board believes will serve the organization. Then, the board should vote in the four members of the Executive Committee to begin promoting leadership within the team. Finally, the board should form the two most essential committees, the

Executive Committee and the Board Recruitment Committee. Sample descriptions for all committees can be found in Appendix G. Accomplishment of these steps will solidify APRF into the Start-up Stage as the board will have begun forming an identity and taking ownership of the organization (Stevens, 2008).

Now that the board has multiple committed members to support the organization, more intentional outreach intended to diversify the organization should be pursued. At this point, the goal is to find professionals in the community with essential skills to serve the organizational mission (Stevens, 2008). The board should aim to recruit at least three new board members in this period of recruitment. Once these board members are approved, the organization can begin expanding the board committees, forming the Finance Committee and Development Committee, and increasing the capacity and function of the organization.

With four functioning committees, APRF will possess a solid group of committed members doing meaningful work for the organization and expanding its overall impact, starting the momentum for APRF to move into the Growth Stage of the Nonprofit Lifecycles (Stevens, 2008). However, recruitment will remain an ongoing process. At this point, APRF should be intentional about stretching their recruitment efforts to bring in board members with specific skills that will complete the board profile. This may be a retired grant writer or reviewer, a banker, a lawyer, an expert fundraiser, or a retired parks professional. Once the board fills these positions and reaches a healthy board size that allows all the functions of the organization to be accomplished in a way that is sustainable for the members, the organization should roll out the final suggested committee, Grants Management Committee, and any other ad-hoc committees deemed necessary by the board.

Figure 2: Phases of APRF Board Development

Even once the board has reached full capacity and has established sustainable operations, the Recruitment Committee's job is not done. It is essential that this committee continues to build connections and recruit future board members for the organization. Some board members may not be able to fulfill their full four-year term. The committee should maintain a readied list of interested community members to fill the voids left by departing board members (Wild Apricot, 2017).

This board development process can be seen as a conceptual flowchart in Figure 2. This flowchart intentionally excludes "target dates" for each step, as this should be determined by the APRF Board of Directors.

Current Skills Needed

Considering that APRF is a very young foundation, the need for board members who have certain skills and who can increase diversity is paramount. APRF needs board members with skills in organizational development, board governance, and fundraising. These needs should drive board member recruitment as APRF moves through the Start-up and into the Growth Stage, in which nonprofit boards will begin to develop the board's sense of ownership (Stevens, 2008). To assist APRF in this diversification process, a sample Board Overview Tracker has been provided in Appendix F.

Current	Current Board Size Three members, does not meet bylaws imposed minimum	
Phase 1	Initial Recruitment Identify and recruit new committed members to meet minimum	Complete Board Meet minimum board size of at least five members
	Committee Formation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Executive - Board Recruitment 	Implement Governance Documents Vote on the following documents and tools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fundraising Case Statement - Gift Processing Policies - Gift Acceptance Policy - Code of Conduct - Whistleblower Policy - Voting Procedures - Grant-Making Process
Phase 2	Ongoing Recruitment Continue growing board size and diversity	
	Growing Board Exceed minimum board size, around eight members	Committee Formation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finance - Development
Phase 3	Ongoing Recruitment Continue growing board size and diversity	Develop Board Fundraising Skills Build mutually rewarding relationship with donors
	Growing Board Expand into a healthy and growing board, around twelve members	Committee Formation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grants Management - And Beyond!
Ongoing	Ongoing Recruitment Continue growing board size and diversity, recruit for board sustainability and transition	

Financial and Fundraising Documents, Policies, and Tools

As APRF begins to solicit gifts and grants, the Board of Directors needs to establish policies for accepting, documenting and recording the gifts. Establishing set policies for these actions will enhance the accountability and transparency of the organization. Because APRF's purpose is to harness private dollars for public benefit, maintaining the public's trust is of the utmost importance. The following suggestions are a starting point for setting up such policies.

Infrastructure

Now that APRF is receiving donations for restoring the Waverly Duck restoration project, the board should consider investing in and utilizing a low-cost donor database management tool such as Salsa CRM, NeonCRM, Little Green Light, or Wild Apricot. There are many higher-cost, more highly-rated programs available, but a low-cost program will be helpful and functional in tracking donor information as APRF gets started with fundraising.

Gift Processing Policy

1. Designate one board member (preferably the treasurer) as the recipient for all donations. It is important that the recipient is not employed by Albany Parks & Recreation, and that physical or online donations are not deposited at Albany Parks & Recreation. APRF must ensure that donors perceive the foundation as financially separate from the department, despite a strong connection between the two.
 - a. Checks can be mailed to the foundation's address, or if an address has not been designated, the address of the board member recipient.
 - b. Online gifts should be made through the organization's website or Facebook page and deposited automatically in APRF's checking account.
 - c. The treasurer or finance committee should be responsible for moving all donations into the investment account, and the board should determine a policy specific to the timing and process of this action.
2. Document or update donor information upon receipt of the gift. Important information for the donor file includes: donor name, donor's partner or family members, date of gifts, gift amounts, purpose of gift, interactions with donor or family members, profession and interests of donor, source and impetus of the gift, and any other relevant information. Too much information is better than too little. Pay special attention to the donor's intention.
3. Create a plan for donor recognition, receipt of donations, donor acknowledgement, and thank-you notes. Consider phone calls, thank you cards, and/or personal emails to donors. Create a policy and plan for thanking donors shortly after their donations, ideally no longer than 3-5 days after receipt of the gift.

Gift Acceptance Policy

The suggested Gift Acceptance Policy, found in Appendix H, protects APRF from accepting a gift that could potentially threaten the organization. It can be tempting to accept any gift that a donor is willing to give, but it is not always prudent to do so. Some

gifts, especially physical property, can cost more in upkeep than they bring in value. Other gifts may be antithetical to the nonprofit's mission, or perhaps the gift may be a useful one, but the organization simply does not have the resources to devote to its upkeep.

Grant Making & Decision Making Process

As APRF begins functioning as a healthy foundation, the Board of Directors should consider developing a specific practice for reviewing and ranking grant proposals. Although APRF will be primarily focused on accepting grant proposals and funding requests from the Albany Parks & Recreation, having a documented process for how grant making occurs can protect APRF from allegations of unfairness and bias in the grant-making process. This is an essential step in pushing APRF through the Start-up Stage, where "basic organizational activities [are] routinized and roles clarified" (Stevens, 2008, p. 61).

For example, if APRF always funds the requests of one branch of the Albany Parks & Recreation Department, but does not fund another branch, it could be construed as favoritism and discrimination against a less popular program. When APRF requests the same materials of all applicants (Albany Parks & Recreation and others), it places the applicants on an even playing field, where they can be evaluated in comparison to each other or to an ideal. Such a process promotes fairness, transparency, and donor accountability, and will be an important part of APRF's future grant making. See Appendix I for a suggested grant making process.

Develop Board Fundraising Skills

APRF is not yet ready for concerted fundraising efforts, and should focus on establishing governance procedures and getting a solid and committed leadership in place through the board recruitment plan. Regardless, as in the example of grant making and decision making, it is not too early to start thinking about orienting board members to fundraising expectations. As the organization grows through the Nonprofit Lifecycles, the funding sources and efforts must diversify (Stevens, 2008). During the board recruitment process, it is important to be upfront with potential board members about what their role as fundraisers may be.

All board members will be involved in fundraising, but they can be involved in a way that suits their personality and skills. At the very minimum, all board members should verbally commit to making a substantial yearly donation to APRF. A "substantial" donation has a different size at diverse income levels, but as the board member role is a large and meaningful commitment, donations from board members should be representative of their larger involvement and make up a substantial proportion of board members' yearly charitable giving.

SET EXPECTATIONS

New board members' verbal commitment to fundraising should also include a commitment to help with at least one of the following: giving major gifts, cultivating relationships with donors, organizing events, engaging in donor identification, or encouraging their friends to make gifts. It is critical to set this expectation with board members early in their term, as it keeps them accountable and avoids confusion later.

GETTING COMFORTABLE TALKING ABOUT MONEY

The most important thing to keep in mind when training nonprofit board members for fundraising is to provide space for honesty and comfort when talking about money. Many boards hold all-day retreats or similarly invest in their board members' comfort level about fundraising. Investing in board members' comfort level, skills, and space to share feelings and trepidation about fundraising is a sound investment. If these barriers and realities are not faced before the board begins fundraising, the board will be less effective.

ASKING FOR MONEY OR BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

The idea is to change board members' perception that they will be simply asking for money into an understanding of building mutually rewarding relationships with donors. See the "Four Steps" document noted in the "Blogs" section of suggested readings for tips about how to move from anxiety about money to empowerment. Fundraising professionals can help board members see that fundraising is just another way of making friends.

Suggested Readings:

There are hundreds of books, blogs, journal articles and other resources about engaging board members with fundraising. Once the APRF board is larger and more committed, the leadership should consider hiring a consultant to get the board moving on fundraising, or dive into the extant nonprofit literature on the topic. See the examples below for a starting place.

Blogs:

[Four Steps to Take Board Members from Fear of Fundraising to Enthusiasm](https://www.gailperry.com/board-training/get-your-board-members-fired-up-and-in-action-for-the-cause-articles/four-steps-to-take-board-members-from-fear-of-fundraising-to-enthusiasm/) - Gail Perry
<https://www.gailperry.com/board-training/get-your-board-members-fired-up-and-in-action-for-the-cause-articles/four-steps-to-take-board-members-from-fear-of-fundraising-to-enthusiasm/>

[Board Members: Some Ideas about Fundraising that Might Surprise You!](https://www.gailperry.com/nonprofit-board-members-fundraising-ideas/) - Gail Perry
<https://www.gailperry.com/nonprofit-board-members-fundraising-ideas/>

[Transform Your Board of Directors into Fundraising Champions](http://nonprofitHub.org/fundraising/transform-your-board-of-directors-into-fundraising-champions/) - Nonprofit Hub
<http://nonprofitHub.org/fundraising/transform-your-board-of-directors-into-fundraising-champions/>

Books:

Let's Have Lunch Together - Marshall Howard
Donor-Centered Fundraising - Penelope Burk
Fearless Fundraising for Nonprofit Boards - David Sternberg

Goal II: Build Public Trust and Integrity

Marketing and Communications

In order to help increase public trust and community awareness about APRF, marketing materials and a strong communication plan are critical. The most important aspect of using these materials strategically and effectively is to focus on specific groups who are the most likely to use and care about the Albany Parks and Recreation department. The consultants from the journalism school put together some strategies to help with this mentality that are summarized below. For more in-depth details, please examine their report.

In considering the Nonprofit Lifecycle model, developing marketing and communication materials will be of great value to APRF as it will require its leaders to articulate the mission, vision, and intentions of the organization. This will push the leadership toward establishing organizational programs and specifying management systems, both of which are essential steps in moving through the Start-Up and into the Growth Stages (Stevens, 2008).

The authors agree with the findings of the journalism school report below, but suggest that APRF focus on families with young children for outreach purposes, rather than soliciting donations from this population. Generally, younger families have less capacity as donors. Older adults and retirees usually make better donors for nonprofit organizations, as they are often more financially stable and are not supporting multiple children.

Summary of Journalism School Report

Focus on engaging businesses and families with young children:

- Businesses
 - Sponsorship opportunities
 - Develop supportive partnerships
 - Focus membership program on businesses
- Families with young children
 - Advertise family fun activities
 - Use Facebook to increase awareness
- Create a website

Annual Donor Report Guidelines & Annual Filings

An annual report for donors and stakeholders is necessary to maintain public trust because it will clearly lay out the financial dealings of the organization and its activities. See Appendix J for guidelines and examples. Additionally, to maintain legal compliance, APRF must file annually with the IRS. Keeping 501(c)(3) status is critical to maintaining donor trust and foundation function. Further specifics for annual filing can be found in Appendix K. The establishment and consistency of these systems serves the Resources and Systems development of APRF through the Nonprofit Lifecycles, where growth is determined by greater independence in money management and diversification in income generation (Stevens, 2008).



Images Courtesy of Albany Parks and Recreation

Website

In order to establish APRF's stability and legitimacy, it is of paramount importance that APRF make a website. This should be the beacon that alerts interested individuals and business about the organization and why they should care or donate.

The business school consultants group has given recommendations of what should be included. Highlights are listed below, but for more in-depth details, please examine their report.

Elements to be Included in the Website

- Donation page
- Social media platforms and ways to follow APRF
- Membership page (if APRF decides to have a membership program)
 Include reporting documents and annual report
- News and Updates section

Other website-related recommendations from the undergraduate journalism school group include the following:

- Visually appealing and easy-to-navigate design
- Description of the organization, the mission, and the goals

- A page showing the different parks and projects the foundation supports
- A page dedicated to projects - ongoing and future
- A page featuring partnerships and sponsors
- A contact page with an address, telephone numbers, and bios of some of the key members

Conclusion

APRF is still working to establish its footing and move itself fully into the Start-up Stage of the Nonprofit Lifecycle. The organization is experiencing normal establishment difficulties that new nonprofits face, but APRF holds great promise. The organization has a strong mission, a dedicated founder, and some founding board members committed to guiding the successful growth of the organization. This report provides the essential first steps in moving APRF solidly through the Start-up Stage and into the Growth Stage, especially regarding board development, financial systems building, and external organizational identity development. The Start-up and Growth Stages of the Nonprofit Lifecycle provide major challenges, as they require an organization to consistently evolve and redefine itself and its approaches to accomplishing the organizational mission (Stevens, 2008). While this report provides a guide for APRF growth, it is essential that APRF leadership take responsibility for regularly assessing organizational needs to ensure which next steps and goals are best for the organization.



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Appendices

Appendix A: Board Member Position Description

Benefits

Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation (APRF) board members are volunteers who give their time diligently to the foundation. In acknowledgement of their time and efforts, APRF offers all board members certain benefits and privileges. This is the foundation's way of showing appreciation and gratitude to all board members.

See below list of benefits for APRF board members:

1. Assorted positive professional and personal benefits in the community that benefit from enhanced social opportunities related to being involved with a positive and well-regarded local nonprofit
2. Receive free, uninterrupted access and preference to all Parks and Recreation facilities that are supported by APRF
3. Entitled to various ticket cost discounts for events taking place at all Parks and Recreation facilities that are supported by APRF. APRF will not be able to provide tickets for sold out events. The tickets should be purchased at least a week before the event
4. Other miscellaneous benefits, such as networking and professional development opportunities

Responsibility & Authority

In accordance with the APRF Bylaws and Code of Conduct, all members shall have the following responsibilities and authority:

1. Shall be the highest decision making body of APRF
2. Shall decide through a majority vote and appoint the Executive Director and or other executive officers of the APRF
3. Reserve the right to terminate all appointed positions through a vote of no confidence for cause as defined by APRF's Bylaws and Code of Conduct
4. Approve the annual budget, disbursement and expenditure of all APRF's income and assets
5. Authorize and participate in and all fundraising activities of APRF
6. Be ready at all times to pitch in and adequately articulate the institution's mission to any and all potential donors

7. Be willing to fundraise for APRF as often as need arises.

Term

All elected board members shall serve one term of four (4) years.

General Duties

(See Board Responsibility and Authority)

Time Commitment

As a very young foundation, APRF aspires for organizational growth and development. This means that the time commitment required by board members goes far beyond just attending board meetings. APRF board members must be willing to commit themselves to the following:

1. Attending all board meetings, committee meetings, retreats, and seminars
2. Travel time and meeting prep, which means reading and preparing ahead of meetings
3. Preparation of action items
4. Availability to serve on ad-hoc and executive committees
5. Be willing to attend planned activities and events organized by APRF

Legal/Financial Commitment

Generally, the board members of APRF have three legal duties. These include:

1. Ensure that the assets of the foundation are preserved and used with prudence. The assets include but are not limited to people, facilities, equipment and goodwill. The board members have oversight for the planning and implementation of all activities of the foundation, i.e. duty of care
2. At all times make decision in the best interest of the foundation and not in his or her interest, i.e. duty of loyalty
3. Ensure that APRF at all times operates in accordance with state and federal rules and regulations, and ensure and that all its activities are in line with the mission of the foundation, i.e. duty of obedience

Qualifications/Skills Requirements

APRF requires its board members to have certain qualifications and skills. Amongst those qualifications and skills are:

1. Experience – In the ever changing nonprofit environment, APRF requires its board members to have a set of basic skills and experience, such as interpersonal skills, fundraising and philanthropy, financial analysis and risk management
2. Strategic skills – APRF requires board members to have skills in leadership, strategic thinking, problem solving and up-to-date management techniques
3. Diversity – Research have suggested that most diversify boards tend to attract and recruit some of the most talented people needed to get the job done. On that note, APRF encourages diversity as one of its main pillars. While diversity may have different interpretations across different boards, APRF’s diversity efforts shall seek to consider cultural, gender, education, race, sexual orientation, and age
4. Interpersonal skills – The need for board members to have interpersonal skills cannot be overemphasized. APRF requires board members with interpersonal skills to engage and interact with other board members, donors and potential donors, foundation’s staffs. Interpersonal skills are much needed when board members have to address controversial and sensitive issues in a timely manner

Appendix B: Code of Conduct

The Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation, founded in 2016, was formed to enhance the City of Albany's parks and recreation opportunities for Albany's residents and visitors. The goal of the Foundation is to promote appreciation, stewardship, and support for the many benefits that parks and recreation opportunities provide to the City of Albany.

To accomplish this goal as well as promote diversity, inclusivity, increase public trust and create a safe working environment for the board members, staff, and volunteers of the Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation, we hereby agree to adhere to the following core values and code of ethics.

As a board member/staff/volunteer of the Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation, I do hereby pledge to uphold and abide by the following:

1. Adhere to professional standards of integrity as well as demonstrate trustworthiness and honesty in all public and personal initiatives to increase public trust and the integrity of our noble foundation.
2. Create conducive environment for professional development and encourage innovative thinking for professional excellence amongst staff and volunteer.
3. At all times avoid any and all actions or behaviors likely to produce conflict of interest with given professional responsibilities.
4. In all undertakings, endeavor to promote diversity, fairness, competence, impartiality, efficiency, effectiveness, and fiscal responsibility at all and any time.
5. Strive to promote equal employment and professional development opportunities without any form of discrimination and/or prejudice.
6. Avoid personal benefits or gains when discharging professional duties and seek to promote public interests all times.

Board Member Signature: _____ Date: _____

Additional Code of Conduct Samples for Reference:

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation: <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/Jobs/Code-of-Conduct>

Arthritis Foundation: <http://www.arthritis.org/about-us/code-of-ethics/>

Virginia Recreation and Parks Society: <http://www.vrps.com/AboutUs/CodeofEthics.aspx>

Appendix C: ARPF Voting Procedures and Information

Adapted from Boylston Chess Foundation Voting Procedures (2011).

The Board of Directors of the Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation, in an effort to promote accountability and transparency, has adopted the following guidelines and rules for eligibility criteria, quorum and voting procedures. The guidelines and rules are in accordance with the developed and adopted Bylaws of the Albany Parks and Rec Foundation, which remain the guiding principles of the foundation until otherwise instructed by the board through a consensus or majority vote cast by eligible board members. The guidelines and rules for voting procedures of the Albany Parks and Rec Foundation are arranged under five sections and they are as follows:

Section I. Eligibility Criteria

The Board of Directors of the Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation shall conduct all election business of the Foundation. Only members of the board who are good standing (as defined by the Bylaws and Code of Conduct) shall be allowed to participate in the board election.

Section II. Officers to be elected

As instructed by the APRF Bylaws, the Board of Directors shall reserve the right to elect a chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary and treasurer to carry out the duties and functions of the Albany Parks and Rec Foundation. The election shall take place at a regular board meeting or a special meeting called by the chairman and another member of the board.

Section III. Quorum

A quorum during the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Albany Parks and Rec Foundation shall constitute an odd number greater than half of the total number of the board of directors in good standing (See Bylaws and Code of Conduct). The quorum shall be determined by a roll-call carried out by the secretary of the board of directors to ascertain the total number of board members present.

Section IV. Nomination

The chairman/secretary of the board shall declare a position(s) vacant to be contested. A motion to vote shall be stated by any member of the Board of Directors and seconded for the voting process to be initiated. Following the motion to vote, any board member shall reserve the right to nominate candidate(s) for the position(s) declared vacant. Each nomination shall receive a seconded to be considered an eligible candidate for said vacancy.

Section V. Voting

Voting shall be done as seen fit by a majority of the Board of Directors. The system of voting shall allow casting of secret ballot or head count to show support for the candidate(s). Board member(s) shall be required to disclose any conflict of interest before the voting process and be required to abstain from the process. Any board member(s) guilty of conflict of interest after casting their vote shall be disqualified and

reprimanded as seen fit by the majority of the board member in according with the Bylaws and Code of Conduct. All elections shall be conducted by the secretary of the board except when confronted with issues of conflict of interest at which time majority of the board member shall elect a member of the board to assume the responsibility.

Section VI. Vote Counting

The secretary or the elected member of the board responsible to conduct the election shall collect all ballots, after the voting is closed, and publically count the ballots before all members of the board. The secretary/elected board member shall tabulate the result of the election and announce the final result of the votes casted. In an event where the election was conducted using headcount, the secretary/elected board member shall record the number of head support each candidate receives and announce the result to the body. A motion shall be raised to adopt the result and seconded for the election to be concluded.

Section VII. Protest

In an event where a candidate or a board member feels that there were irregularities during the election, a period of five business days is allotted for any complaint(s) regarding the just ended election to be submitted to the secretary of the board. The complaint shall be submitted to the chairman of the board who will immediately appoint a grievance committee to investigate the allegation and submit a comprehensive report to the body within ten business days after the committee was initiated.

Section VIII. Penalty

In an event whereby the grievance committee report substantiate the claims of the complaint filed, the board of directors shall decide the penalty depending on the gravity of the act committed and in according with the foundation's Bylaws and Code of Conduct. The penalties for such actions shall range from an official apology to the board of directors, suspension from the board for a period agreed by majority of the board members, to expulsion from the board as deemed appropriate by majority of the board members.

Appendix D: Albany Parks & Recreation Foundation Whistleblower Policy

Adapted from the National Council of Nonprofits (2010b), "Sample Whistleblower Protection Policy".

Albany Parks & Recreation Foundation (APRF) requires directors, officers and employees to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of duties and responsibilities. As employees and representatives of APRF, we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

Oregon Law

According to Oregon Law §659.505: "Public employers cannot prohibit employees from reporting or punish employees who reasonably report criminal activity or gross waste of public funds. It is unlawful for any employer to demote, suspend or discharge an employee who in good faith reported criminal activity, aided in a criminal investigation or has brought a civil suit against the employer."

Reporting Responsibility

This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise serious concerns internally so that APRF can address and correct inappropriate conduct and actions. It is the responsibility of all board members, officers, employees and volunteers to report concerns about violations of APRF's Code of Conduct or suspected violations of law or regulations that govern APRF's operations.

No Retaliation

It is contrary to the values of APRF for anyone to retaliate against any board member, officer, employee or volunteer who in good faith reports an ethics violation, or a suspected violation of law, such as a complaint of discrimination, or suspected fraud, or suspected violation of any regulation governing the operations of APRF. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment, board membership, or volunteer participation.

Reporting Procedure

APRF has an open door policy and suggests that employees share their questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints with the board Chairperson. If you are not comfortable speaking with the board President or you are not satisfied with the board Chairperson's response, you are encouraged to speak with another member of the board Executive Committee. Supervisors and managers are required to report complaints or concerns about suspected ethical and legal violations in writing to the APRF's Compliance Officer, who has the responsibility to investigate all reported complaints.

Compliance Officer: Compliance Officer: The Compliance Officer may be a board member, the Executive Director, or a third party designated by the organization to receive, investigate, and respond to complaints.

APRF's Compliance Officer is responsible for ensuring that all complaints about unethical or illegal conduct are investigated and resolved. The Compliance Officer will advise the Board of Directors of all complaints and their resolution and will report at least annually to the Finance Committee on compliance activity relating to accounting or alleged financial improprieties.

In the scenario in which the Compliance Officer is unable to perform duties due to a conflict of interest or being the individual under investigation a replacement Compliance Officer will be selected by APRF's Executive Committee.

Accounting and Auditing Matters

The APRF's Compliance Officer shall immediately notify the Finance Committee of any concerns or complaint regarding corporate accounting practices, internal controls, or auditing, and work with the committee until the matter is resolved.

Acting in Good Faith

Anyone filing a written complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

Confidentiality

Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

Handling of Reported Violations

The APRF's Compliance Officer will notify the person who submitted a complaint and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation. All reports will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation.

{Board President}

Albany Parks & Recreation Foundation

{Contact Information}

Policy approved by the Board of Directors on {Date}

Board Member Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix E: Sample Volunteer Application

Developed by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs (2016).

Window of Work - Example Volunteer Application

NAME: JOHN DOE

GLAD GIFTS (SPECIAL SKILLS, TALENTS, INTERESTS YOU LIKE TO USE)

Things you do well and enjoy doing. Don't hesitate to list something; you'd be surprised how your talents can be utilized.

- Typing
- Talking to people
- Writing
- Working with youth
- Administrative duties
- Square dancing

QUESTS (AREAS YOU WOULD LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT)

List areas of interest you may not have the skills to perform but you would enjoy learning about.

- Computers
- History of organization
- Chairing a committee
- Bookkeeping

NO-NO'S (PLEASE DON'T ASK!)

- Anything you really don't want to do
- Canvassing for funds
- Public speaking

Appendix G: Board Committees

Board committees provide structure and clarification to working nonprofit boards by specifying where responsibility and task accountability lies within the organization (Center for Nonprofit Management, 2017). Committees should plan to meet regularly outside of normal Board of Director meetings to accomplish designated tasks. It is the intention that board officers shall chair the standing committees as listed below, but ad-hoc committees may be developed at any time and be chaired by any willing and qualified board member.

Executive Committee

Adapted from “The Executive Board’s Roles and Responsibilities” (Barlow, 2015).

The Executive Committee shall be led by the board Chairperson and shall be made up of the board Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary. It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to plan board development opportunities, review major issues that APRF faces, and make preliminary decisions for discussion and voting for each full board meeting.

Board Recruitment Committee

Adapted from “Building an Effective Board” (Lysakowski, 2004).

The board Recruitment Committee shall be led by the Board Chairperson and involve two to four additional board members. It is the responsibility of the board Recruitment Committee to develop a board Recruitment plan, seek new board prospects, recruit and interview potential board members, make nominations to the full Board for consideration via official processes, and track board member terms to plan and prepare for future needs. It is not the role of the board Recruitment Committee to select new board members, but rather to be the recruitment and vetting process for potential board members to be voted on by the full governing board.

Finance Committee

Adapted from “The Finance Committee and Committee Chair Responsibilities” (Foley, 2009) and “Building an Effective Board” (Lysakowski, 2004).

The Finance Committee shall be led by the board Treasurer and involve two to four additional board members. It is the responsibility of the Finance Committee to develop an annual operating budget, make suggestions to any major changes in the budget as needed, monitor organizational adherence to the budget, set long-range financial goals in alignment with the Development Committee goals, develop operating budgets that integrated organizational strategic plans, and present all financial goals and proposals to the Board of Directors for approval.

Development Committee

Adapted from “Role of the Development Committee” (Association of Fundraising Professionals, 2002).

Appendix F: Board Overview Tracker

Adapted from Lysakowski 2004.	[revision date]	Board Member Names														
	Term Expires	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Demographics	Male															
	Female															
	Non-Gender Binary															
	21-30 years															
	31-40 years															
	41-50 years															
	51-60 years															
	61-70 years															
	71+ years															
Ethnicity	African-American															
	Asian															
	Latina/o/x															
	Native/Indigenous American/Alaskan															
	White															
	Multi-Racial															
	Other															
Giving Potential	High															
	Medium															
	Low															
Expertise	Legal Issues															
	Personnel Management															
	Financial Management															
	Fundraising															
	Grant Writing															
	Grants Management															
	Public/Community Relations															
	Planning/Organizing															
	Parks & Recreation															
	Power Group															
Influence With:	Business/Financial Community															
	Ethnic/Minority Groups															
	Media															
	Government															
	Education															

The Development Committee shall be led by the Vice Chairperson and involve two to four additional board members. It is the responsibility of the Development Committee to establish fundraising policies, set fundraising goals and objectives, develop strategic plans for accomplishing fundraising goals, develop expectations for board member financial contributions, involve and cultivate major gift prospects, demonstrate leadership in the solicitation of gifts, plan and coordinate any major development events and initiatives, and assess development practices to make suggestions for consistent improvement.

Grants Management Committee

The Grants Management Committee shall be led by the board Secretary and involve two to four additional board members. It is the responsibility of the Grants Management Committee to seek grant application opportunities, compile and submit grant applications, track and fulfill awarded grant requirements, update the Board of Directors of grant submissions and awards on a quarterly basis, inform the Finance Committee of successful grant applications, and work with the Albany Parks and Recreation Department to ensure grant funding is being properly and responsibly applied.

Appendix H: Gift Acceptancy Policy

Adapted from National Council of Nonprofits (2010a), "Sample Conduct Policies for Board Members."

Whereas Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation actively solicits gifts and grants to further the mission of the organization, and;

Whereas there is the potential for controversy if certain gifts are accepted, the organization has adopted the following Gift Acceptance Policy:

When considering whether to solicit or accept gifts, the organization will consider the following factors:

- Legal Status — whether the gift will jeopardize the organization's status as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization;
- Values and Mission — whether the acceptance of the gift compromises any of the core values or the charitable mission of the Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation;
- Compatibility — Whether there is compatibility between the intent of the donor and the organization's use of the gift;
- Public Relationships — whether acceptance of the gift damage the reputation and relationships of the Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation;
- Primary Benefit — whether the primary benefit is to the Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation, versus the donor;
- Consistency — is acceptance of the gift consistent with prior practice;
- Form of Gift — whether the gift is offered in a form that Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation can use without incurring substantial expense or difficulty;
- Effect on Future Giving — whether the gift will encourage or discourage future gifts.

All decisions to solicit and/or accept potentially controversial gifts will be made by the Board of Directors, until the Executive Committee is established. At the time that the Executive Committee is established, the Executive Committee will decide whether to accept potentially controversial gifts in consultation with the Executive Director. The primary consideration in such decisions will be the impact of the gift on the organization, rather than the impact of gifts on board member or staff member reputations or relationships.

Appendix I: Suggested Grant Making Process

The following process is a rough guideline for how to structure a grant making cycle, and is adapted from Counselling Foundation of Canada "Granting Process."

1. Before funding cycle, develop:
 - a) Two meeting dates for deliberation about proposals and applications
 - b) Scoring criteria and process for ranking applications
 - c) Total amount of money to be distributed that cycle
 - d) Guidelines for applications
 - e) Grant letter of agreement
2. APRF sends out Request for Proposal (RFP) to potential applicant agencies
 - a) RFP should be sent out approximately 75-90 days before board meeting where directors will select the winning grant proposal
 - b) Deadline for initial proposals set 30 days after RFP is sent out
3. Applicant agencies submit initial grant application proposals
 - a) Board meets to select finalist projects
 - b) Notify all finalists and unsuccessful applicants simultaneously, within one month RFP deadline
4. Invite finalists to submit a complete grant application
 - a) All finalists receive the same guidelines for crafting their application and are notified of application deadline
 - b) Agencies generally need 30 days to develop grant application
5. Deadline for grant application submission
 - a) Meeting of Board of Directors
 - b) Review finalists' applications according to guidelines, and scoring criteria and process
6. Communicate decisions to finalists
 - a) No more than a week after deadline for submission
7. Meet with recipient(s)
 - a) Grant Letter of Agreement signed by APRF and applicant

Appendix J: Tips for Effective Annual Donor Reporting

From Blue Avocado “The Secret to a High Impact Annual Report.”

Nonprofits often put a great deal of time and effort into our annual reports, especially compared with how briefly most recipients will look at them.

Many nonprofits treat annual reports as comic books because stakeholders tend to look at four aspects of the report:

- Read the letter (typically from the Executive Director and the board Chair)
- Check to see if they’re listed (if they are a donor)
- Read the captions on photos
- Look at the financials to see how big you are and if you had a surplus or a deficit

Yet, (with the exception of The Letter) these are the areas that are often done at the last minute and without real thought. Below are some additional guidelines to help easily put together an annual report. There are two different mentalities, the first is the older way of thinking for nonprofits, the other is newer age thinking. One isn’t necessarily better than the other for each question, they are just different.

First Question

Old: Which of our activities do we want to highlight?

New: What are the 2 - 5 accomplishments people would be surprised to hear that we did?

Picture Selection

Old: What pictures do we have? Who should we put in it (examples: volunteers, board members)?

New: What would be 2 - 4 great captions? What photos can we take or get that would be relevant to those captions?

Distribution

Old: Let’s send it to board members, funders, volunteers.

New: Let’s send it to everyone who is mentioned in the annual report plus nonprofits that we work with. Plus the moms of everyone on staff.

Budget Allocation

Old: By doing a 4-page annual report that we photocopy double-sided and staple, we show how frugal we are with your money (poverty mentality).

New: By having an 8-page attractive but modest annual report, we look and feel like the kind of organization you feel comfortable giving money to (upbeat, confident mentality).

The Letter

Old: “Polite and warm” is the way to go, but sound official.

New: Get personal. Don’t hold back. Share something intimate and meaningful in the letter that can give an insight into your work and/or your year. Tell the reader something that makes him or her feel like an insider.

Staff Photo

Old: Show how friendly we look / how diverse we are / how young we are / how big we are (etc.).

New: Include close-ups of individuals at various levels and at different jobs, with captions that say something about the person and accomplishments. Example: "Marisa takes the blood pressure of a young Nicaraguan immigrant -- Spanish is just one of the 11 languages we have on staff."

Final secrets: Put your annual report up on your website and spread out a hardcopy on the walls of your lobby. Have a 10-minute discussion about it at the board meeting. One way to think about the annual report is as a brochure disguised as an annual report: who should this particular brochure go to, and what responses are we trying to evoke from them?

Examples

Maryland Nonprofits Annual Report

<https://marylandnonprofits.app.box.com/s/trb2ykpeoszlmtdcmwg4njppi9qec7fmw>

Bend Parks & Recreation Annual Report

<http://www.bendparksandrec.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/BPRD-Playbook-Fall-2016-Online-Edition.pdf>

Billings Parks & Recreation Annual Report

<http://www.billingsparks.org/wp-content/uploads/2016-Annual-Report-Final-Red.pdf>

References

Other guidelines can be found at <https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources/nonprofit-annual-reports>.

Appendix K: Annual Filings

From Hurwit & Associates (2017) "Oregon Registration and Compliance".

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE

Form: Annual Return Form 990

Due Date: 4 ½ months after end of fiscal year

Internal Revenue Service

Ogden, UT 84201-0027

Information: (800) 829-1040

Forms: (800) 829-3676

Web Site: www.irs.gov/charities

Filing Fee: \$0

Public Charities: Refer to the IRS website to determine which form to file (Form 990, Form 990-EZ or Form 990-N).

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Form: CT-12

Due Date: 4 ½ months after end of fiscal year

Charitable Activities Section

Oregon Department of Justice

1515 SW 5th Avenue

Suite 410

Portland, OR 97201-5451

Information: (971) 673-1880

Fax: (971) 673-1882

Web Site: www.doj.state.or.us

Filing Fee: \$0-200 (depending on revenues)

OREGON SECRETARY OF STATE

Form: Annual Report for Nonprofit Corporations

Due Date: Annually within 45 days of the anniversary date on which the original Articles of Incorporation were filed.

Secretary of State

Corporation Division

255 Capitol St. NE

Suite 151

Salem, OR 97310-1327

Information: (503) 986-2200

Fax: (503) 378-4381

Web Site: www.sos.state.or.us

Filing Fee: \$50

Notes: The annual report may be filed online at: egov.sos.state.or.us/br/pkg_br1_web_rnewl.login

A confirmation copy may be obtained for an additional fee of \$5.

Conclusion

Nonprofit organizations seek to have a meaningful impact on the communities that they serve. These organizations are complex, but their members find strength in uniting behind a common goal. The City of Albany partnered with the University of Oregon's spring 2017 Nonprofit Consultancy class to address the needs of the Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation (APRF), the Albany Parks and Recreation Department (APRD), and the Albany Senior Center Foundation (ASCF). The City of Albany's partnership with the Nonprofit Consultancy class sought to facilitate the identification of solutions that will lead these organization to future success. Each student group formed a set of methodologies, conducted research, evaluated case studies, performed stakeholder interviews, and provided the organizations with detailed recommendations for a path forward.

The Albany Senior Center Foundation

The team developed five recommendations for ASCF:

- Develop the board and guiding future direction
- Increase communication and awareness with center members
- Harness member talents to increase foundation capacity
- Develop organizational investment and fundraising
- Divest the foundation from the city

The Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation

The team focused on two goal areas for APRF: 1) Developing a sustainable board; and 2) building public trust and integrity. For developing a sustainable board, the team provided recommendations regarding board member recruitment, and organizational finances. For building public trust and integrity, the team provided recommendations regarding marketing and communications, donations, and website development.

The Albany Parks and Recreation Department

The team developed six recommendations for APRD:

- Launch an initiate action phase with neutral facilitation
- Adopt an aspirational common agenda
- Develop shared measurements
- Leverage mutually reinforcing activities
- Improve continuous communication
- Provide backbone support

