BCRPA British Columbia Recreation & Parks Association

STRATEGIC OUTLOOK

2025 - 2027

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge with humility and respect that we live and work on the traditional territories of First Nations peoples across British Columbia.

We specifically acknowledge and express our gratitude to the keepers of the lands of the ancestral and unceded territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səl̓ilwətaʔɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, on whose lands our main office is located.

We also respectfully recognize the rights of Indigenous peoples across British Columbia and Canada as set forth in the United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP).

GUIDING OUR WORK 2025-2027

BC Recreation & Parks Association (BCRPA) is a not-for-profit organization that convenes, champions, and educates professionals and programs that transform lives.

Communities across the province grow stronger, healthier, and more connected through the essential work of our recreation and parks community, including:

5800+ members

116+ local governments

11 First Nations communities

2800+ fitness professionals

Since 1958, BCRPA has provided leadership, training, and support, underpinned by the principles of accessibility and inclusion, to help our members meet provincial and local health and physical activity priorities.

Guided by our 2025-2027 Strategic Plan, our work is grounded in our commitments to reconciliation, increasing well-being through physical activity and access to nature, addressing climate change, and supporting belonging within our communities. Overall, we are committed to fostering healthy and resilient communities through the power of recreation and parks.

This plan focuses on four strategic priority areas — **Influence, Develop, Lead, and Govern** — each designed to empower our members and fitness professionals whose work is focused on shaping a healthier, more resilient province now and in the future.

WHO WE ARE

OUR PURPOSE

To connect and inspire professionals to build healthy and resilient communities through the power of recreation and parks.

OUR VISION

We empower recreation, parks, and fitness professionals to cultivate **vibrant, active, and inclusive communities where everyone thrives.**

OUR VALUES

Integrity | Sustainability | Resilience
Inclusion | Equity | Connection

OUR COLLABORATORS

Collaboration is foundational to our work.

Provincially, BCRPA is the Co-Chair of the Physical Activity for Health Collaborative, a member of the BC Alliance for Healthy Living, and works closely with the Recreation Foundation, BC Parks Foundation, viaSport, SportBC, RFABC and i·SPARC. **Nationally**, we are members of the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA).

WHO WE ARE: OUR COMMITTMENTS

WELL-BEING

OUR COMMITMENT TO INCREASING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND ENSURING ACCESS TO GREEN SPACE

We are committed to creating and supporting opportunities for communities and people to access places and programs that will allow them to be active across their lifespan. This includes continuous promotion of the importance of physical activity and access to nature as essential and key tenets to public health and overall well-being.

WHO WE ARE: OUR COMMITTMENTS

RECONCILIATION

OUR COMMITMENT TO HONOURING INDIGENOUS WAYS OF KNOWING AND BEING

We are committed to learning and unlearning different knowledge systems and ways of being. We connect our actions to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. When developing frameworks, programs, or professional events, we endeavour to partner with Indigenous leaders and revisit the practices of recreation and parks to incorporate Indigenous perspectives.

Community Wellness Program, Kamloops
Program Excellence Award Recipient 2023

WHO WE ARE: OUR COMMITMENTS

BELONGING

OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR COMMUNITIES

We are committed to fostering an organizational culture and community spaces that support belonging and embrace Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) in all aspects of our work. We recognize the importance of creating environments that are welcoming and accessible to everyone. Through ongoing dialogues, training, and partnerships, we strive to remove barriers, amplify underrepresented voices, and promote equity and fairness within our organization and throughout the sector. This commitment to belonging aligns with our vision to enhance the well-being of all British Columbians, fostering communities that thrive.

Unwin Park and Jumpstart Playground, Surrey
Parks Excellence Award Recipient 2021

WHO WE ARE: OUR COMMITMENTS

CLIMATE CHANGE

OUR COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY

We are committed to ensuring our work actively contributes to the health and well-being of our planet and communities, and that recreation and parks spaces remain vibrant and accessible for generations to come. We champion environmental and land stewardship as well as initiatives such as waste reduction, energy efficiency, water conservation, and biodiversity protection. We will continue to promote and integrate sustainable practices into all facets of our operations, programs, and partnerships and support our members to reduce their ecological footprint and enhance the sustainable management of parks, recreation facilities, and green spaces.

Brocade Marigold Seedling from Get Growing, Victoria!
Program Excellence Award Recipient 2022

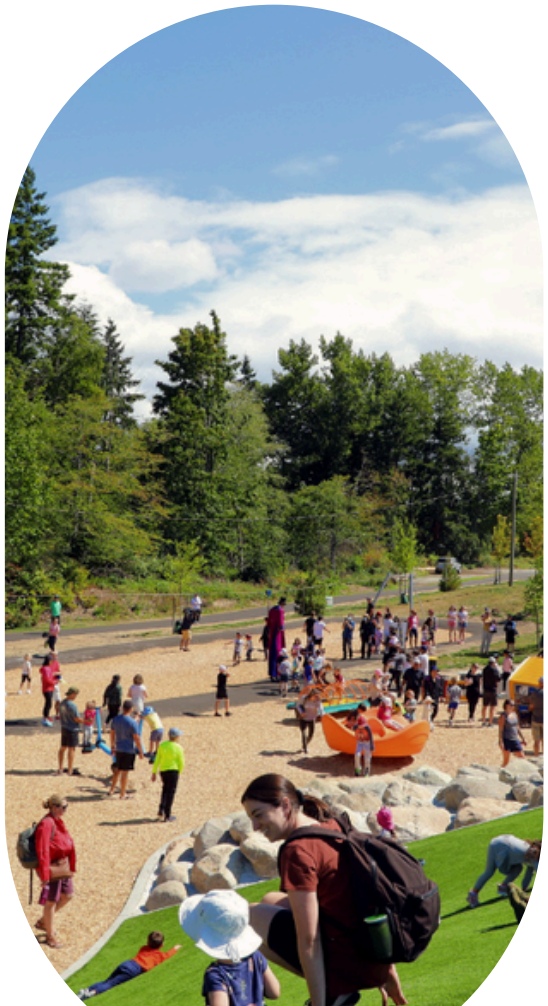
WHAT WE DO: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

INFLUENCE
ADVOCATE & AMPLIFY

We advocate for policies and partnerships that enhance the sector's visibility and collective impact.

Over the next three years, we will build on current collaborations and position ourselves as a key government partner for policy input and program funding.

By further inspiring and engaging our members and continuing to grow the largest registry of fitness professionals in the country, we will expand our influence and drive collective efforts to promote the value of recreation and parks in building healthier communities.



Surrey's Edgewood Park.
Parks Excellence Winner, 2023

WHAT WE DO: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

DEVELOP
CONVENE & EDUCATE

We empower recreation and parks and fitness professionals and support their work to drive positive change across British Columbia.

We enhance the capacity and leadership of our members and fitness professionals through high-quality training and mentorship programs, targeted professional development and enhanced accreditation standards. We ensure they have the tools, resources and opportunities they need to thrive and become recognized leaders in their communities.

By sourcing funding to support these initiatives, we also ensure our education standards are the benchmark within the industry and build a sustainable foundation for ongoing professional excellence and growth.

BCRPA Symposium 2025, Whistler

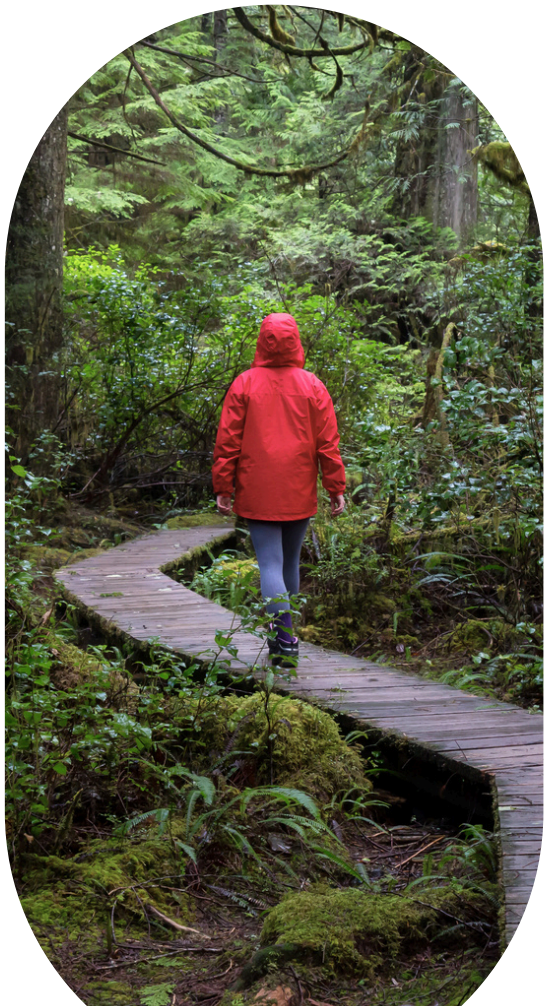
WHAT WE DO: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

LEAD
COLLABORATE & BUILD

We work collaboratively with partners and communities to be a catalyst for positive change in the sector.

Our work is underpinned by our commitment to reconciliation, increasing well-being through physical activity and access to nature, addressing climate change, and promoting equity, diversity and inclusion.

Over the next three years, we will convene and engage interested parties in meaningful dialogues and initiatives that tackle these critical issues. By identifying challenges and opportunities unique to our members' communities, we will empower them to lead locally driven efforts that advance social and environmental justice and build more inclusive and resilient communities.



WHAT WE DO: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

GOVERN

INNOVATE & SUSTAIN

We lead with bold governance practices that support sustainable growth and adaptability.

This allows us to ensure BCRPA remains a high-performance organization prepared to meet the evolving needs of our sector.

We will continue to establish a dynamic governance culture by creating a succession plan for key leadership roles, enhancing board development, and implementing a robust annual self-evaluation framework. Through these efforts, we will ensure accountability, transparency, and strategic alignment, positioning BCRPA to lead with confidence and vision while maintaining the sustainable success of the organization.

City of Coquitlam's Sheffield Park
Parks Excellence Award
Honourable Mention, 2024

HOW WE DO IT

OUR STRENGTHS

BCRPA is uniquely placed to execute our vision as a leader in the sector.

This includes our proven ability to:

- **Convene** 96% of BC's communities directly through our membership, partnerships with provincial agencies, organizations, and governments
- **Develop** and deliver high-quality programs and services since 1958
- **Build** and sustain impactful partnerships locally, provincially, and nationally within and outside the recreation and parks sector
- **Support** the development of healthy, active, and connected communities through our education, partnerships, and programs
- Lead within the sector as the "go to" resource for expertise on recreation and parks
- **Advocate** for the the essential role of the recreation and parks, physical activity and well-being to the general public and key stakeholders
- **Set** provincial standards in the fitness industry and across the sector.

AREAS OF FOCUS

INVESTMENT IN SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Population growth coupled with aging infrastructure, requires ongoing capital investment to support physical activity levels province-wide.

BCRPA has convened a province-wide multi-sectoral table of public, private and non-profit partners able to inform the social infrastructure needs across BC. We are seeking further resources to:

- **Support a data-informed approach** to addressing social infrastructure needs and future planning across the province through a robust and visualized data set to guide decision-making.

- **Create a long-term strategic plan** for recreation and parks infrastructure alongside establishing regional hubs that can be used in collaboration with Indigenous Governments to support long-term spaces and places planning.

6th Street Play Area, New Westminster, Parks Excellence Award Recipient, 2023

AREAS OF FOCUS

SUPPORTING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN OLDER ADULTS

BCRPA has a long history of delivering programs to support Older Adults to become and stay physically active, reducing isolation and being connected to others in their communities. We are currently seeking support to:

- **Deliver and expand existing provincial programming** that supports healthy aging through key BCRPA interventions to prevent or manage health issues that increase the risk of frailty and falls.
- **Expand the ActivAge program** we now deliver, as well as expand the knowledge of BCRPA's fitness professionals in both older adult specialization and aquatic fitness.
- **Create a cognitive fitness program** that supports both physical and brain health, training professionals throughout BC to offer this program free of charge.

Choose to Move Program, 2025

AREAS OF FOCUS

ENHANCING YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

We know that youth mental health is at a tipping point.

Youth programs are underfunded, and training for youth workers can be limited. Utilizing our extensive experience supporting youth mental health, we are requesting:

- **Support for youth programming grants** for the development of prevention and early intervention training to be delivered in community settings to youth workers who work to support 11 to 25-year-olds.

BCRPA's Empower YOUth Conferece (EYC), 2022

AREAS OF FOCUS

INVESTING IN BC'S FUTURE

Across BC, workforce shortages are affecting the delivery of recreation, parks, fitness, and aquatics programs, with rural and remote communities often facing the greatest challenges.

We are seeking support for:

- Coordinated investments that address staffing shortages and strengthen workforce resilience, support recruitment and retention, and ensure communities can continue to access the programs and services they rely on.
- Expanded investments in BC’s aquatics workforce, including subsidized lifeguard and instructor training and wage supports for aquatic facilities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The development of this plan and its implementation is possible because of the work of countless committed recreation and parks professionals.

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  - Krista Pearson, Northeast
  - Alissa MacMullin, Northwest
- **BCRPA Staff**
  - Kathryn Tindale
  - Katie Fenn
  - Leslie Dickout
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