

ccap

CALIFORNIA ACTION PLAN

GUIDING THE PARK
& RECREATION
PROFESSION



FOREWORD

Welcome to the California Action Plan!

After meeting with and soliciting feedback from over 15,000 CPRS leaders, members, students and researchers, we are proud to bring you the California Action Plan. This plan builds upon the original Vision, Insight and Planning (VIP) document created by and for our profession almost 20 years ago and will help guide the parks and recreation field for the next 20 years.

The basic tenets of the original VIP Plan have proven timeless. After many discussions and much thought, it was determined that the original VIP vision still rings true . . . *We create community through people, parks and programs.* The California Action Plan (CAP) takes that vision to a new level, by creating actionable tools professionals can use to bring this plan to life in their communities.

So, what exactly will the CAP do for our profession? The CAP introduces tools in five major areas of our parks and recreation work. With the use of these tools, we assist our professionals to better advocate, communicate, evaluate, innovate and collaborate. These “living” toolkits will be evaluated, refreshed and updated annually by CPRS Leadership, with the help of YOU, our professionals.

We know these tools, along with the great work of the professionals who use them, will unite us in achieving our new vision of *Leading the nation in parks and recreation.* Join us in action.

Stephanie Stephens, Executive Director, CPRS

Jim Wheeler, President, CPRS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ADVANCING PARKS AND RECREATION

Purpose of the Plan2

Broad-Based Involvement2

FACING THE FUTURE

Our Values5

Core Competencies6

Priority Trends.....7

DEFINING AN ACTION FRAMEWORK

Mission and Vision.....9

Goals10

Action Framework11

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Advocate14

Communicate15

Evaluate.....16

Innovate17

Collaborate.....18

More Info19

TELLING OUR STORY

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



ADVANCING PARKS AND RECREATION

Working together, professionals from across the State of California have envisioned the future of parks and recreation. We've created a plan to proactively address the trends and challenges we foresee. These directions are summarized here in the **California Action Plan: Guiding the Park & Recreation Profession (CAP)**.

The CAP builds on the 1998 *VIP Project: Creating Community in the 21st Century* (VIP Plan). The VIP Plan's vision and many strategies have proven to be timeless and are still relevant today. However, our profession has grown and changed over the last 20 years. New recreation trends and changing demographics influence the services we provide; different organizations, partners and professionals are involved; new technologies impact the way we do business; and new tools are needed to guide us.

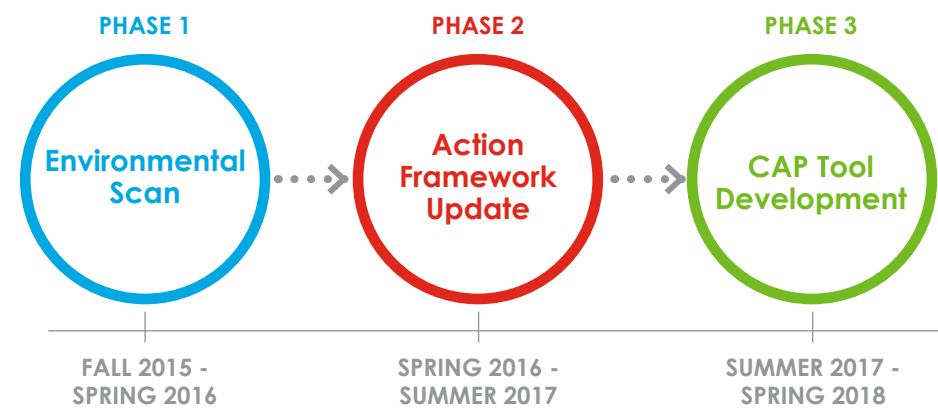


The CAP is launched simultaneously with four new tools to support professionals in the field. It is intended to evolve as CAP Action Teams continue to develop, test and launch new tools—and connect professionals to existing resources—to achieve our goals for the future.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

This document provides an overview of the CAP planning process. It updates the VIP Plan's values, vision, mission and goals. It identifies what professionals believe are the most significant trends to address in the next 10 years, along with the competencies needed to address them. It introduces a five-year Action Plan along with links to four new tools initiated through this planning effort.

Moving forward, CAP actions are intended to be reviewed by CPRS Board members on an annual basis to provide direction for resource development, trainings and initiatives.



BROAD-BASED INVOLVEMENT

The California Action Plan brings together the insights of park and recreation professionals and allied partners from across California. Five groups guided its development:

- CAP Executive Team
- CPRS Board of Directors
- Project Steering Committee
- Tool Development Action Teams
- CPRS District and Section Leaders



The CAP Team reached out to more than 15,000 participants over three years to ensure the plan represented diverse professionals and all communities across California. The CAP Project Team, in collaboration with California State University faculty and students, identified emerging themes, values, and priorities as noted through these activities and forums:

- CAP Online Survey
- Consider.it
- CAP Think Tank
- CAP Tool Pop Up Kiosk
- CAP Roundtable
- Action Team Work Sessions
- CPRS Board & Section Summits
- Steering Committee Video conferences
- CPRS web updates
- CPRS Magazine
- Eblasts & Tuesday Tidbits
- Session Interactive Polling: Xtreme Professionalism
- Administrator's Section Interactive Polling: Creating Community in the 21st Century





FACING THE FUTURE

Our values inspire us, and our skills and competencies prepare us to face head-on the trends and challenges we anticipate in the future. The CAP defines the values, professional and organizational competencies and trends relevant to our work.

OUR VALUES

Integrity: We act with honor, sincerity and pride in our work and achievements.

Leadership: We motivate community members, allied partners, and elected officials through our expertise and actions.

Community Service: We engage our communities, involve diverse stakeholders, and provide outstanding customer service to meet community needs.

Accountability: We are responsible, reliable and dependable, taking ownership in and advocating for our community goals.

Health and Wellness: We foster healthy individuals, communities and places by supporting active lifestyles, mental and physical well-being and best practices in environmental design.

Innovation: We are change-agents for our towns, cities, state and nation.

Playfulness and Celebration: We infuse our work with joy and celebrate opportunities to play and gather.

Diversity: We recognize and serve people of different ages, cultures, abilities and interests and strive to provide inclusive, equitable and accessible services.

CORE COMPETENCIES

As individuals and organizations, we prepare ourselves with the right knowledge, skills and proficiencies to achieve our goals. These core competencies fill our toolbox with the assets we need to be successful.

PROFESSIONAL CORE COMPETENCIES

- Communication
- Leadership
- Budget Management
- Resourcefulness
- Interpersonal Skills
- Community & Technical Knowledge
- Strategic Thinking
- Innovation
- Risk Management
- Mentoring, Training & Teaching
- Multi-Tasking Flexibility
- Planning & Assessment

ORGANIZATIONAL CORE COMPETENCIES

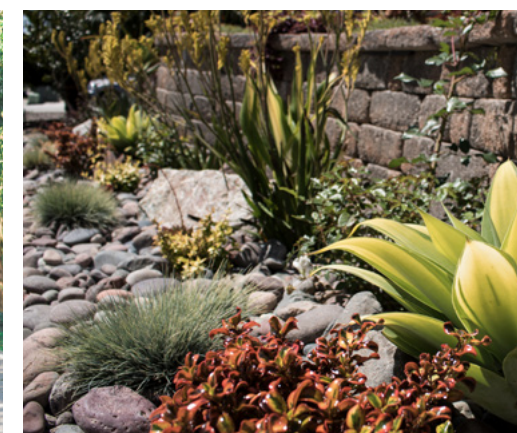
- Communications, Marketing & Branding
- Staff Development
- Partnership Development
- Community Leadership
- Resource Development & Management
- Research, Planning & Design
- Cultural Diversity & Inclusion
- Outcome-Driven Management
- Human Development
- Ecosystem & Resource Management
- Organizational Cohesiveness
- Political Acumen
- Client Services
- Technology



PRIORITY TRENDS

Our competencies equip us to address the major issues and trends that will affect our work in the next five to ten years. The following trends were identified as our priorities to address.

- HEALTH AND WELLNESS
- REVENUE GENERATION AND COST RECOVERY
- CHANGING TECHNOLOGY
- DEMOGRAPHIC AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY
- SOCIAL MEDIA
- SOCIAL EQUITY
- ASSET REINVESTMENT
- PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION
- WATER CONSERVATION
- AGING POPULATIONS
- ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY





DEFINING AN ACTION FRAMEWORK

The CAP Action Framework illustrates the outcomes of our mission-driven services, rooted in the strategic tools that support our professional efforts.



GOALS

We face new trends and challenges head-on as we work to achieve the following goals for our communities and all California residents:

Promote health and wellness: Promote physical, emotional and mental health through fitness, play, and activity.

Support economic vitality: Attract new businesses, foster economic development, promote community revitalization, increase tourism, provide jobs and generate revenues to support the economic vitality of our communities.

Create recreation experiences: Get people involved in their communities by creating engaging programs, special events and new recreation experiences.

Foster social cohesiveness: Create cohesive communities by celebrating diversity, providing inclusive services, modeling compassion, promoting social equity, connecting social networks, and ensuring all people have access to the benefits of parks and recreation.

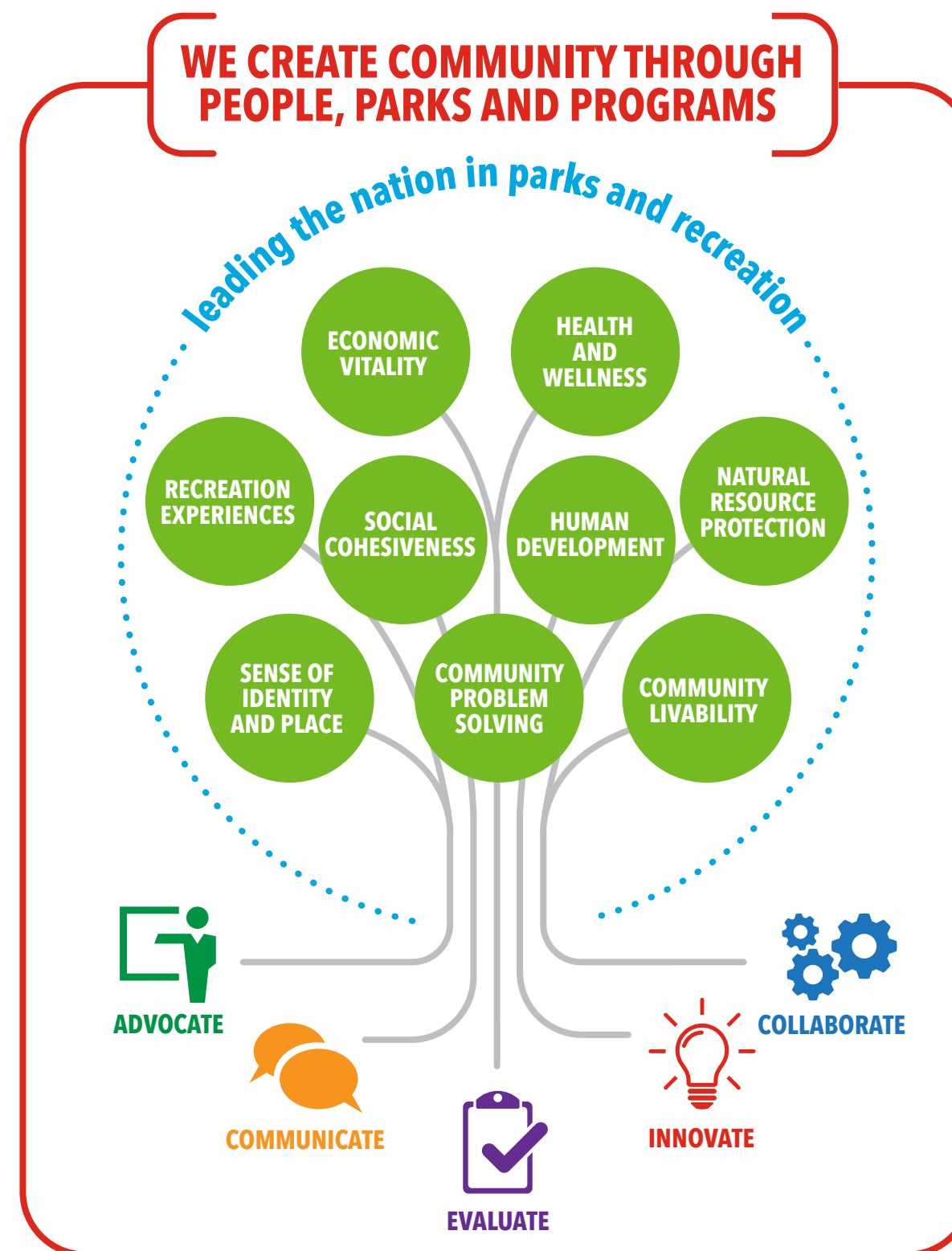
Support human development: Support youth development and lifelong learning to foster social, intellectual, physical and emotional growth in people of all ages and abilities.

Protect natural resources: Protect habitat and open space, connect people to nature, promote the ecological function of parkland, and sustain and steward our natural resources.

Strengthen community identity and sense of place: Provide parks, facilities, and services that reflect and celebrate community character, heritage, culture, history, aesthetics and landscape.

Facilitate community problem-solving: Apply skills in community engagement, collaboration, leadership and facilitation to resolve community problems and issues.

Support community vibrancy: Support safe, vibrant, attractive, walkable communities that make life better through parks and recreation.





STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The California Action Plan identifies five key strategies for enhancing parks and recreation opportunities. We must **advocate**, **communicate**, **evaluate**, **innovate**, and **collaborate** in the next five years to enhance communities across the State.

The plan also identifies priority actions and introduces new tools and resources to share. In celebrating 70 Years of Inspiring Excellence, four tools will be introduced at the 2018 CPRS Conference & Expo. The remaining actions should be revisited annually by the CPRS Board and CAP Tool Development Teams to continue to build our toolbox for the future.



ADVOCATE

Influence public policy at the local, state, and federal level to advocate for parks and recreation.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

1A **Develop** messaging tools that can be used with councils and other elected officials to advance CAP Goals. Tools should be easily adaptable and may include:

- Presentations
- Briefings / messaging
- Infographics on key trends
- Videos / success stories

1B **Continue** advocating for statewide funding to support parks and recreation for communities and localities.

1C **Provide** guidance to localities in proposing, navigating and advocating for local funding measures to support parks and recreation.

1D **Prioritize** leadership development to equip park and recreation professionals with the skills and competencies to promote social equity, asset management, cultural and natural resource protection, and an investment in community livability, health and wellness through parks and recreation.



A customizable story board and data to ADVOCATE for support and investment in parks and recreation services to enhance community livability.

COMMUNICATE

Communicate the vision and value of parks and recreation to staff, community leaders, stakeholders, and partners to raise awareness of park and recreation services and benefits.



PRIORITY ACTIONS

2A **Refresh** materials associate with the Parks Make Life Better!® brand.

- Updated logo
- Materials in English and Spanish
- Customizable materials for different media

2B **Develop** Community Messaging Platforms that help CPRS members effectively reach their communities with consistent messaging that communicates the value of parks and recreation. These platforms may include:

- Social media primers
- Sample agency communication plans
- Sample community messaging campaigns
- Sample press and media releases

2C **Design** and implement a statewide public relations program including:

- A Speakers' Bureau with designated spokespeople to educate, inspire, train and activate stakeholders, decision makers, park and recreation staff and allied professionals
- Data and success stories that connect agencies with new (newsworthy) research and data



A refresh of the Parks Make Life Better! brand, messaging and delivery platform to COMMUNICATE the value of our work.



EVALUATE

Research and document successes and track performance across the profession to measure outcomes and influence public opinion and policy.

INNOVATE

Evolve approaches and practices to respond to emerging trends and meet the needs of our changing communities.



PRIORITY ACTIONS

- 3A** **Create** a curated online resource with program evaluation and other decision-making tools successfully used by CPRS members. Enable members to rate the tools to communicate their value to potential users.
- 3B** **Launch** a full CPRS membership survey to assess professional priorities, training and tool needs every five years, as well as to document the changing demographics and diversity of professionals.
- 3C** **Identify** core objectives and performance measures to track and evaluate the outcomes of programs and initiatives.
- 3D** **Develop** CAP organizational and professional competencies within park and recreation staff, agencies, volunteers and other service providers and track outcomes.
- Partnerships with universities and technical programs to align curriculum with priority competencies needed in the profession
 - Training opportunities offered through CRPS
 - Information clearinghouse of trainings offered by related organizations and allied professionals
 - Promotion of accreditation programs
 - Tracking numbers of accredited CPRS members



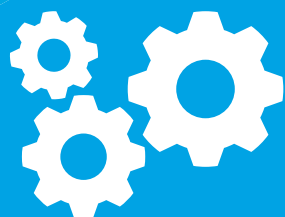
An online library of tools and resources to help us EVALUATE and make decisions about the services we provide.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- 4A** **Share** innovative program approaches and interactive platforms that inform and inspire, including:
- RecTalk videos in CPRS online library
 - Online documentation of the CPRS Best of the Best Showcase, emphasizing innovative outcomes that would benefit other agencies
 - Online data collection tool to document the who, what, when, where, why of innovative practices, along with contact information
 - Online request form to suggest and request potential Rec Talks and innovative topics
- 4B** **Create** an interactive, searchable catalogue, hosted on the CPRS website, with links to evidence-based practices related to a variety of different topics. Define roles and responsibilities for populating and updating the catalogue.
- 4C** **Respond** to changing demographics and cultural diversity by developing and sharing strategies and outreach techniques for:
- Recruiting culturally and ethnically diverse staff
 - Diversifying park users
 - Reaching diverse community members and underrepresented groups
- 4D** **Continue** to foster social equity by identifying information, processes and tools that help communities reduce barriers to access and provide safe, welcoming and inclusive parks, open spaces, activities and programs.
- 4E** **Support** natural resource stewardship and best practices to address local and global-scale challenges, the impacts of climate change, and environmental resiliency.



Video-recorded RecTalks to model the ways in which we diversify and INNOVATE programs and services to meet community needs.



COLLABORATE

Engage allied professionals, citizens, educators, policymakers, interest groups, corporate sponsors and service providers in collaborative efforts to leverage resources, meet broader community needs and maximize outcomes.



PRIORITY ACTIONS

- 5A** **Share** strategies and materials that support, expand and diversify collaboration and partnerships, including:
- Joint use agreements
 - Guidelines for partnership/volunteer management
 - Partner/volunteer awards program and templates
 - Decision-making tools for donations/partner contributions
 - Formation guidance on "Friends of Parks" groups and park foundations
- 5B** **Build** and strengthen partnerships with community-based organizations, statewide agencies, recreation and health providers, other allied partner and academic entities who are advocating for common issues and are working towards common goals; share research and resources.
- 5C** **Create** an alliance between tourism, health, sports and recreation industry professionals and the CPRS Board of Directors; consider bi-annual meetings to discuss shared interests in strengthening participation in recreation and outdoor activities.
- 5D** **Seek** opportunities to share our expertise in community-building by offering our services to allied partners to advance compatible goals.

Find more information on the California Action Plan and key strategies by following the links below.



CALIFORNIA ACTION PLAN

<http://www.cprs.org/page/cap>



ADVOCATE

<http://www.cprs.org/page/advocate>



COMMUNICATE

<http://www.cprs.org/page/communicate>



EVALUATE

<http://www.cprs.org/page/evaluate>



INNOVATE

<http://www.cprs.org/page/innovate>



COLLABORATE

<http://www.cprs.org/page/collaborate>



VIP ORIGINAL PLAN

<http://www.cprs.org/d/do/1704>



TELLING OUR STORY

Across all strategies and actions for achieving our goals, one reality resonates: **The story of parks and recreation is inextricably intertwined with the stories of our communities and the people and places of California.** We need to do a better job of telling this story.

As park and recreation professionals, we have a unique capacity to speak to our residents and State leaders about community livability, social equity, environmental resiliency, economic vibrancy and healthy living—among other critical topics of our time. We have this ability because of the multi-faceted benefits that parks and recreation provide and thus the expertise that we carry with us.



In the next five years, we must speak both through our words and through our actions to remind people that parks make life better, and better lives matter to all California residents.

We stand ready to lead our communities, our State and even the nation in this regard. This is the purpose of the California Action Plan—to guide park and recreation professionals to excel at what we do best and where we are needed most.

After twenty years, our mission continues: We create communities through people, parks and programs. The desire to make life better through parks and programs remains strong.

The thing that has changed is our need for new techniques, tools and technologies to respond proactively and strategically to changing trends and times. CAP gives us tools and guidance to act definitively in leading California communities to a better future.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We appreciate the efforts of all park and recreation professionals that shared their insights and contributed to this plan. Your leadership will continue to foster the success of California's park and recreation system.

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CPRS HQ Team
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*Working together to advance
the Park and Recreation Profession*

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