

2014-2018 Strategic Plan

***Active, Healthy Living
Through Recreation and Parks***





RPAY Strategic Plan
April 2014 to March 2018
Condensed Version

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In collaboration with RPAY Staff, Board and Stakeholders

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Terminology

The list below describes how several common terms are used in the strategic plan.

Recreation involves leisure-time activities in which people choose to participate. Recreation can be active (e.g. walking the dog, playing soccer) or passive (e.g. reading a book, enjoying a concert). Recreation involves physical activity, sport, arts, cultural activities and community events. When we refer to **community recreation**, we recognize the grassroots role of people who create recreation opportunities in their own communities.

“Parks” is usually associated with “recreation”, particularly in the context of public or municipal recreation. As RPAY is the territorial parks and recreation association, our strategic plan uses these two terms together. However, we think of “parks” as more than municipal parks. **Parks** are our outdoor environments developed for recreation purposes. **Parks** include playgrounds, developed and natural green-space, land and water trails, and government-designated parks.

Outdoor Space refers to our outdoor environments where people choose to recreate. **Outdoor spaces** include parks, playgrounds, streets, school yards and fields, trails, waterways, campgrounds, green-space and “the Bush”.

Recreation Places generally refers to facilities and community infrastructure. **Recreation places** provide opportunities to participate in recreation and include community halls, recreation complexes, arenas and pools, libraries, schools, museums, art galleries, private gyms, etc.

Active Living is referred to as **active, healthy living** to demonstrate the connection between an active lifestyle and a healthy lifestyle. Active living means we value and integrate physical activity into daily routines. Active living is one component of a healthy lifestyle.

Active for Life is an important concept which implies participation in active recreation over the lifespan. Active for Life encourages people to choose activities in which they can participate independently at any time, any place and at any age.

Winter Active for Life emphasizes the importance of learning and participating in lifelong activities which encourage people to be physically active during the winter months. Studies territorially, nationally and internationally, demonstrate the need to improve physical activity levels particularly during the long, cold, dark days of winter.

Healthy Eating implies access to nutritious foods as well as the knowledge and skill needed to eat healthy. RPAY believes that healthy eating supports a physically active lifestyle. Active living and healthy eating are two components of a healthy lifestyle.

Accessible implies inclusive, affordable, barrier-free opportunities to participate in recreation.

Our Belief

RPAY believes that personal and community engagement in recreation and parks provides many benefits which positively impact the health of individuals, communities and our environment. Recreation and parks are essential services in our communities and participation is a right of all citizens regardless of gender, ethnicity, income status or ability. Opportunities to participate, and environments which encourage participation, must respect local values and traditions. An effective territorial system of recreation and parks requires the support from all levels of government and community leaders. When recreation and parks are delivered as an essential service, benefits to Yukon people and communities will follow.

Our belief is consistent with the benefit statements which state that:

- Recreation, sport, arts, culture and parks are essential to personal health. Active Living is a key determinant of health status.
- Recreation, active living, sport, arts, culture and parks are key to balanced human development helping Canadians reach for their potential.
- Recreation, active lifestyles, fitness, sport, arts, culture, parks and trails are essential to quality of life and place.
- Recreation, sport, arts and outdoor pursuits reduce self-destructive and anti-social behaviour.
- Recreation, sport, active living, arts, culture and parks build strong families and healthy communities.
- Recreation, active lifestyles, sport, arts, culture and parks reduce health care, social service, and police/justice costs!
- Recreation, sport, art, culture and parks are significant economic generators in Yukon.
- Parks, open spaces, and natural areas are 'greenspace' essential to wellbeing and our environmental and ecological survival.

From: <http://benefitshub.ca/the-benefit-messages/>

Our Values

- Lifelong participation in recreation, arts, culture and physical activity.
- Accessible recreation where people of all abilities can participate.
- The outdoor and informal spaces which make an active, healthy lifestyle easy.
- The way people and groups work together to make community recreation happen.
- The benefits of recreation and parks.

Our Vision

RPAY envisions a Yukon where recreation and parks are essential and integral to the quality of life and well-being of Yukon residents and communities; where all citizens have opportunities to engage in recreation experiences which contribute to physical, emotional and social well-being; and where recreation connects people to their communities and environments.

Our Mission

RPAY empowers communities to support Yukoners to lead an active, healthy lifestyle through recreation and parks.

Our Slogan

Active, healthy living through recreation and parks

Our Strategic Priorities

RPAY's strategic priorities provide guidance and set parameters for the work we do.

- Strengthen leadership for community recreation.
- Support opportunities which make it easy for rural Yukoners and others facing barriers to participate in recreation.
- Promote and support accessible, affordable and inclusive recreation.
- Encourage active recreation for life.
- Promote and support winter active for life.
- Promote healthy eating as it supports an active lifestyle.
- Work with others to create environments which support an active, healthy lifestyle.
- Accept projects which contribute to the sustainability of our organization.

Our Goals

1) **We promote a healthier Yukon through active living, parks and recreation.**

We do this by:

- a) Building the case for recreation as an essential service for an active, healthy population by sharing knowledge with individuals, stakeholders, communities and governments.
- b) Developing our brand, connecting messaging and using social media to increase awareness of recreation opportunities and benefits of an active, healthy lifestyle.
- c) Launching and maintaining a website, a hub where information and resources about recreation and active, healthy living can be accessed.
- d) Packaging our core recreation programs and services to help Yukoners adopt and sustain active, healthy lifestyle behaviours.

2) **We strengthen community recreation by supporting opportunities for learning and development of recreation practitioners, community leaders and volunteers across the Yukon.**

We do this by:

- a) Connecting recreation practitioners and staff to relevant networking, training and professional development.
- b) Providing training which builds a network of skilled community recreation leaders and volunteers who deliver accessible and affordable recreation and active living opportunities in their communities.
- c) Ensuring leaders serving rural and special populations have the appropriate training and certification to provide recreational opportunities related to active for life, winter active, water safety, fitness and/or Nordic walking.
- d) Providing access to learning and resources to help leaders, teachers, groups or communities initiate and integrate quality opportunities for children and youth to be physically active during and after school.

3) We support accessible and affordable opportunities for Yukoners to be active through community-based recreation and parks initiatives, programs and services.

We do this through:

- a) Programs which enable participation over the lifespan, during the winter, at school and after-school, and programs which encourage active use of recreation places and outdoor spaces.
- b) Special Events which promote participation in lifelong, active recreation and foster a sense of community support and belonging.
- c) The promotion of parks and trails as essential community recreation places and spaces which provide access to active outdoor recreation.
- d) Initiatives which enable all Yukoners, regardless of age, gender, ability or means, to participate in recreation and an active lifestyle.

4) We operate effectively and efficiently using sound business practices and partnerships to foster sustainability.

We do this by:

- a) Strengthening governance practices through Board development and engagement, review of the constitution and policies, and effective Board–Staff communications.
- b) Operating efficiently using accepted fiscal management processes, following generally accepted accounting principles, developing relevant policies and seeking core funding.
- c) Ensuring human resource practices reflect changes in staffing, enable professional development opportunities, make achieving organizational goals easy, and evaluate, recognize and/or reward staff and volunteers.
- d) Networking, communicating and coordinating within the recreation and healthy living sectors locally, territorially and nationally, and by collaborating with key stakeholders and funders to maximize resources and achieve our goals.