



WRCA

WILLOW RIDGE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



2021 - 2027

STRATEGIC PLAN

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Joint letter from the President and the Chair of the Strategy Committee



Dear neighbours:

It is with great pleasure that we present you the Willow Ridge Community Association's (WRCA) 2021-2027 strategic plan. This plan will help you and our broader stakeholder group understand how the WRCA will achieve its two strategic priorities for the coming years: **Rebuild the Community Experience** and **Build Internal Capabilities**.

The WRCA is responsible for creating and sustaining communities in our two neighbourhoods: Maple Ridge and Willow Park. It does so by providing relevant programs, events, and services with care and safety in mind. Our north star is to serve our community, and as a team, we take our responsibilities with prudence and passion. For this reason, we kept the interests and needs of our community at the center of our strategic planning process.

As part of this process, the Strategy Committee reviewed the WRCA's vision, mission, and values. Updates were made to ensure that its purpose statements and values are a true reflection of the role it performs in our community. We synthesized the former guiding principles into six core values which are aligned with how we aspire to operate and interact as a team and with our stakeholders on a continuous basis. Together, they provide an effective direction for the organization as it launches into its journey to achieve its two strategic priorities.

Significant internal and external studies have been performed to understand the needs and priorities of the community and how the WRCA can operate with resilience to deliver on its mandate. Our strategic plan takes into consideration the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, and factors in the ever-important element of safety in our operations going forward.

The board will work towards the strategic priorities and as a team we will monitor, measure, and report upon on a specific set of key performance indicators on an annual basis. These indicators demonstrate accountability to our community, keep our volunteer board and staff engaged, and ensure that our planned objectives and action plans remain relevant and meaningful.

We invite you to review this strategic plan, get inspired to collaborate, and help make our community a great place to live for years to come.

Let's do this together.



Don Boykiw
President



Andrés Galindo
Chair, Strategy Committee

November 27, 2021



ABOUT THE WRCA



The WRCA was established in February of 1967, and has operated continuously ever since within the terms of our License of Occupation granted by the City of Calgary (“the City”). We are governed by the Alberta Societies Act, our bylaws, and adhere to the City’s Public Use Policy. We have a strong relationship with our Neighbourhood Partnership Coordinator and our liaison from the Ward 11 Councillor’s Office who are key links between us and the City.

Today, there are over 8,000 residents and over 200 businesses in the Maple Ridge and Willow Park neighbourhoods combined¹. Our community enjoys a sustainable influx of new residents and local entrepreneurs which together create a great mix of diversity in our population with access to convenient products and services.

The WRCA has made great improvements in the last years, the most significant being the completion of the new community building in September of 2019. Our hope is that the new building will live up to be a community hub and a place of gathering where great community experiences will happen and remain in memories. Our updated facilities help us provide relevant programs, events, and services that can improve the community experience for all. They can support a variety of activities including public and private gatherings, sports, and gardening. Many of our facilities have been recently upgraded thanks to the generous donations from our donors and the hard work and dedication of our passionate board members, volunteers, and community staff.

We encourage volunteering for people to get together to help in areas of interest, passion, and community need. Our volunteers provide countless hours of support in various initiatives and get to network with others who share similar interests and want to make Maple Ridge and Willow Park a better place to live.

While the majority of our individual, family and business members are from the Maple Ridge and Willow Park areas, we also have members from the Acadia, Fairview, Lake Bonavista, Ogden, Riverbend, and Southwood neighbourhoods.

Our community is at the center of everything we do.

We are living through challenging times and our focus is to rebuild the community experience for today and the future.

¹Based on the City of Calgary’s 2016 census and projections for Maple Ridge and Willow Park.

Maple Ridge and Lake Bonavista circa 1967



OUR PURPOSE & VALUES



Our

Vision

To be an integrated community connecting partners, family, neighbours, and nature.

Our

Mission

To foster an integrated community by providing meaningful and inclusive programs and experiences, safe gathering spaces, and advocacy for the needs and interests of our residents.

Our

Values

Neighbourly in our collaboration

- We welcome and acknowledge everyone
- We empower people to connect, learn, and share
- We have fun!

Accountable for our decisions

- We take ownership of actions and responsibilities
- We operate in compliance with relevant bylaws and regulations
- We act with integrity

Transparent in our actions

- We provide a collective, transparent, and collaborative environment
- We communicate clearly and regularly with all of our stakeholders
- We strive to share ideas and work together with transparency

Utimize our resources with care

- We enable people to channel their passions towards the good of the community
- We are good stewards of our resources
- We pursue quality, value, and sustainability in our efforts

Respect each other

- We value diversity and different points of view
- We promote and facilitate a sense of belonging
- We encourage social inclusion

Embrace change

- We leverage technology to improve the way we connect and collaborate
- We are willing to try new things and challenge ourselves
- We learn from the past and connect it to our future



WRCA COMMUNITY BUILDING FRAMEWORK



The WRCA Community Building Framework is our approach for addressing the needs of our community with consistency and continuity. This framework is community-centered and emphasizes the role of the WRCA in supporting our people, neighbourhoods, and partners.

The framework has six layers that together tell the story of how we intend to address the needs of our community, which is purposefully placed at the center.



Community first

- Members
- Residents
- Businesses

Research and discover our community's need areas

- Family
- Financial
- Spiritual
- Social
- Environmental
- Convenience
- Health and wellness
- Safety and security

Define our purpose and values to keep focus

- Mission
- Vision
- Values

Establish strategic objectives

- Rebuild the community experience
- Build internal capabilities

Action our strategy with the right resources

Governance

- Bylaws
- Policies
- Procedures

People

- Board members
- Community staff
- Volunteers

Work to improve key areas

- Memberships
- Programs
- Events
- Volunteerism
- Communication
- Sustainability
- Technology
- Community focus
- Friendly service
- Continuous improvement
- Partnerships
- Advocacy
- Communication

COMMUNITY

is much more than
belonging to something;
it's about doing something
together that
makes belonging matter



OUR APPROACH TO STRATEGY



Our approach to delivering on our mandate is supported by two key documents that reflect on the way we plan to achieve our strategic objectives:

Community Strategic Plan

This document sets the strategic direction for the WRCA, it sets forth a common vision and mission for the future and defines the values that guide us as we work to **Rebuild the Community Experience** and **Build Internal Capabilities**. It presents a set of strategic priorities that will be worked on for the duration of the plan. As well, it incorporates important feedback from key stakeholders gathered through interviews, surveys, and research.

Community Business Plan

As part of the multi-year approach, the board will work to develop a specific set of annual **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** in collaboration with community staff, which will help the WRCA execute its strategy and move towards the achievement of the strategic objectives. The business plan will determine specific actions designed to deliver value to the community, and results will be assessed at least annually against the KPIs to determine the level of success and determine any needed adjustments to the business plan.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Rebuild the community experience

1. Increase our membership value

Why it matters

Membership is a key indicator of our success in delivering on our mandate to create and sustain community. Sustaining current members and growing the number of new members indicates that we are doing the right things to add value and serve our community.

What we will do

Create a strategic partnership collaboration game plan.
This will help us determine the base requirements that we need to consider when engaging with new and existing strategic partners in such a way that we achieve a mutual exchange of value while working towards our vision and mission.

Establish strategic partnerships with local businesses.
This will enable us to develop win-win partnerships that provide meaningful sources of value like discounts to members and also provides promotional opportunities for local businesses.

Strengthen our working relationship with the City of Calgary.
This will help us leverage City resources and initiatives and channel them for the benefit of our community.

Seek membership value feedback on a periodic basis.
This will help us obtain candid feedback to help us improve on an ongoing basis and gain the trust of our members and partners.

2. Introduce relevant programs and services for our community

Why it matters

We desire for our affordable and quality programs and services to be among the top choices in the community for individuals, families, and businesses. Our new community centre and adjacent facilities are meant to be utilized and be busy with fun activities and meaningful experiences for all.

What we will do

Learn about our community's needs in a consistent manner.
This will help us tailor our programs and services continuously to what our community needs as our demographics evolve over time.

Partner with community organizations and research trends.
This will enable us to collaborate with other community-focused organizations and learn of new and exciting programs and services to introduce them in our community in alignment with its needs.

Seek programs and services feedback on a continuous basis.
This will help us obtain candid feedback to help us improve on an ongoing basis and gain the trust of our neighbours and guests.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Rebuild the community experience

3. Improve the volunteer experience

Why it matters

Volunteers are the life blood of the WRCA. Our board and volunteers ensure that our community gardens thrive, they are out in the night cleaning the ice rink for everyone to enjoy, and they help our community programs run. Since our beginnings, our volunteers helped establish WRCA's place in the community. Fostering a culture of volunteerism and celebrating our volunteers and is crucial to ensuring that the WRCA can remain active and effective for the next decades.

What we will do

Develop a volunteer program.

This will help us improve the way we approach volunteerism and provide guidelines on how to manage it and maintain it.

Increase and maintain an active volunteer base.

This will help us effectively deploy resources to help address specific community related needs while providing volunteers with specific, meaningful and rewarding opportunities to participate with skills, knowledge, and passions.

Keep an updated and centralized record of volunteers.

This will help us develop an organized way of managing our relationship with our volunteers in order to keep in touch, inform them of upcoming volunteer opportunities, and celebrate their milestones.

Improve the ways we reward and recognize volunteers.

This will help us keep a motivated team of volunteers who we will recognize periodically and based on their needs in order to encourage retention and referrals.

Seek volunteer feedback constantly.

This will help us obtain candid feedback to help us improve on an ongoing basis and gain the trust of our volunteers.

4. Improve our communication and engagement with our community

Why it matters

Simply put, our community needs to know what's going on in the neighbourhood. We need to find ways to reach those parts of our neighbourhoods that are not aware about us and are not informed of our role in the community. In the past, we connected through paper, phone, and in person. While this is still applicable today, we need to keep current with the times and make sure that we increase the quality of our content and communicate with all demographics effectively using traditional methods, virtual and social media platforms.

What we will do

Create a communications strategy.

This will help us ensure that our communication policy, plans, and processes support all board committees and facilitate complete, transparent and relevant messages to the community.

Develop a marketing plan.

This will help us determine guidelines and processes for executing marketing campaigns that will improve our visibility in the community.

Enhance our virtual presence.

This will help us extend the community experience online and enable us to connect better with those who prefer virtual, and give us an opportunity to show more of our facilities and how others use them for recreation and community building.

Leverage technologies to make communication easier.

This will help us become easier to reach and will also enable us to provide a much better virtual experience through our website, and other communication channels to foster community effectively.

Monitor the performance of our communication efforts.

This will help us establish a set of KPIs that will enable us to understand how effective we are in our processes and identify improvement opportunities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Build internal capabilities



1. Improve the way we organize ourselves to work together and achieve success

Why it matters

For the WRCA to be able to deliver on its mandate, there are many things to be done in the coming years that will require an improvement in the way we work, collaborate, and make decisions. We want to be effective and efficient in the way we operate internally for the benefit of our community.

What we will do

Build our board committee structure by creating a Terms of Reference for each team.

This will help everyone understand the purpose, responsibilities, and authority that each committee has with respect to a set of delegated activities, as well as, the criteria needed to escalate decisions to the board on an as needed basis.

Develop clear and relevant roles and responsibilities for staff.

This will help our community staff work effectively and efficiently with each other, with the board, and with community volunteers.

Establish annual key performance indicators and perform annual reviews of our strategic objectives.

This will help the board keep accountable and understand how much progress has been achieved on the priorities set forth in this strategic plan and decide if any adjustments to the plan are warranted.

2. Improve our ability to serve effectively and efficiently on a daily basis and in the face of disruption

Why it matters

People and businesses from our neighbourhoods and other surrounding communities come to us for a variety of needs, and we need to be ready to deliver in order to build trust with our community.

What we will do

Document standard operating procedures for key processes. This will help current staff and board members to carry out procedures with consistency and will be useful to train new team members on what needs to be done and the way we work.

Develop a business continuity plan to be prepared in case of future major operational disruptions.

This will enable us to continue serving our community in the face of unprecedented and adverse events such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Create a talent management strategy to attract, retain, and motivate board members, volunteers, and staff.

Our people are our greatest asset, and we need to improve the way we engage them in meaningful initiatives and activities that bring higher value to the team.

Perform 360° board member and staff performance reviews.

This will help us identify areas of personal success and any blind spots that need corrective action in order to constantly improve the way we deliver value to the community.

Create a data strategy for collecting relevant information from our stakeholders.

This will help us to study our stakeholders in the future to learn of any trends or observations that can help us improve the way we deliver value.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Build internal capabilities



3. Sustain our financial strength and seek ways to improve it through new and innovative funding sources

Why it matters

We strive to maintain our operations sustainable in the long-term, which will require stable sources of income to finance our costs of delivering programs and services to the community in a consistent and continuous manner.

What we will do

Create a funding strategy that supports our operations with sufficient financial resources.

This will help us identify new sources of revenue or funding opportunities that will enable us to operate continuously.

Develop a reasonable delegation of financial authority.

This will help us understand how to best work with our financial resources in a prudent manner and with necessary approvals.

Review and update programs, services, and facility rental fees annually.

This will help us to make sure that our pricing remains affordable and accessible, while reflecting any significant changes in the local economy.

Improve current accounting processes and support systems.

This will help us maintain complete financial records and contribute to an effective annual external audit process.

Improve the budgeting and forecasting process.

This will help us anticipate potential cash surplus or shortfalls that may warrant a reprioritization of expenses in the short and long-term.

4. Create a community reinvestment strategy

Why it matters

To have a better chance at growing our programs and services, we will need to spend accordingly to make sure that we create enough capacity to accommodate the potential growth in demand for our programs and services.

What we will do

Improve our capital expense planning process.

This will help us prioritize a set of capital expenditures that are aligned with the needs of our community and will help add value to everyone's community experience.

Develop an operational revenue and expense plan.

This will enable us to understand our facilities' capacity utilization to identify opportunities to increase it and achieve community building while working towards predetermined financial and community based KPIs.



5. Increase our advocacy efforts on key neighbourhood matters

Why it matters

In the next decade, our neighbourhoods will experience a variety of changes that range from changing demographics to urban planning. As primary advocates for our neighbourhoods, we play a critical part in voicing the perspective of our neighbours and businesses to the City of Calgary, and we need to continue doing so with better community engagement.

What we will do

Create a gameplan for community engagement.

This will help us determine the scope of our civic affairs activities that are of importance to our neighbourhoods and communicate these to the broader community in order to garner support and foster collaboration to get things done.

Improve community awareness of our role as advocates.

This will help us communicate our position as advocates on key community matters to improve community engagement and collaboration for the betterment of our community.

Enhance the community's direct access to the Civic Affairs Committee.

This will help us improve the quantity and quality of input we need to understand the community perspective holistically and in a consistent manner.



OUR STRUCTURE



In early 2021, the WRCA board decided to transition to a committee structure that promotes teamwork, learning, and collaboration. Committees are generally composed of board members, volunteers, and staff who work together to make programs, events, and great community experiences possible. As we build our committees, specific strategic priorities and annual organizational goals will be delegated to them by the board in order to share responsibility and accountability.

Our board members are first and foremost, residents of Maple Ridge and Willow Park. They have a strong sense of community and responsibility for making our neighbourhoods the best they can be. Each is voted in by our members and can participate in one or more committees of the board by virtue of their interests, passions, and expertise. Our board members are students, parents, professionals, retirees, and entrepreneurs. Our board is always looking for passionate individuals to join our team and help create a better future for the community.

Our desired structure includes the following committees. As we work towards achieving our strategic objectives, there may be a need for additional committees.



Executive Committee

President

Leads the board, oversees any fundraising activities and is the primary spokesperson of the WRCA.

Vice President

Supports the acting President, assists in activities and is the acting lead during the President's absence.

Treasurer

Oversees the WRCA finances, the money collection and allocation process, and advises the board on financial strategy.

Secretary

Keeps records of information, such as the minutes taken during board meetings, and preforms other administrative tasks.

OUR STRUCTURE



Finance and Audit Committee

Assists the board in fulfilling its obligations and oversight responsibilities in relation to financial planning, the annual audit process, and financial reporting. It plays an important role in advising on the health of the WRCA's finances and when required, makes strategic recommendations to the board.

Strategy Committee

Partners with all board members and key stakeholders to develop an understanding of community priorities through a collaborative problem-solving approach. It is instrumental in the strategic planning process and independent assessment of strategic projects.

Human Resources Committee

Addresses all human resources needs of the board, staff, and volunteer resources. It develops policies that help the WRCA take pragmatic actions to demonstrate a commitment to team member integration and success that is based on our organizational values.

Communications Committee

Manages all communications activities for the community association and creates communication strategies to effectively communicate with our community on recent and relevant developments.

Facilities Committee

Oversees the management of the facility, such as the safety of the building, and prioritizes which repairs or renovations need to be done.

Civic Affairs Committee

Acts as the primary liaison between the WRCA and the City of Calgary. It is responsible for facilitating community engagement with government initiatives, area development plans, and in advocating for the civic needs of our residents in accordance with our vision and mission.

Social Committee

Responsible for creating a social, collaborative and engaged community and workplace. It is responsible for organizing social events that foster community and collaboration.

Fundraising Committee

Responsible for grant writing, casino coordination, and donations. It liaises with key stakeholders to ensure that the right opportunities are pursued and all documentation is in place to meet the established requirements.

Capital Projects Committee

Identifies, prioritizes, and manages significant projects that align with the needs of our community and require larger sums of capital. Develops capital budgets, is active in project risk identification, and in project management.

Community Staff

Responsible for the day-to-day operations of the community association. As a team, they functionally report to the executive committee and maintain working relationships with the board's committees as needed, to make sure they get the support and guidance needed to execute on the strategic priorities.





COMMUNITY TESTIMONIALS



“ I helped out in the 2021-2027 strategic planning process with a variety of activities and it was such a great experience! I really enjoyed the open communication, selfless knowledge sharing and interactions with an amazing group of professionals that strive for the mutual success of the community. ”

Before joining, I was eager to learn about what community associations are and do and now I can say that I have a good understanding of the WRCA's role in addressing the community's needs. I have developed an appreciation for how important it is to engage and offer my time and knowledge to pursue growth opportunities, improve the activities that benefit our communities and also gain invaluable experience and knowledge.

I am passionate about giving, it brings me satisfaction and joy. I would say that this was my greatest experience as a volunteer, and I would recommend everyone to join the lovely WRCA family. I believe that every chance to volunteer is an opportunity to learn, to take a risk and do things differently and make society better.

Andrea Ciurte
Strategy Volunteer



“ We are a long time business partner and member of the WRCA. We've grown together and collaborated in many ways over the years, specially in initiatives that help bring community together. We value our relationship and look forward to continue connecting with the community for years to come ”. ”

Southcentre Mall

COMMUNITY TESTIMONIALS



“ I started to volunteer on the Ice Crew for two reasons. First, my family was younger and we used the ice on a regular basis - therefore, this was a way to support the services that we used; and second, it was a fun way to connect with other friends in the community. ”

Now, my family hasn't skated on the ice for 5 years - however, this is a way for me to give back to the community and it's still fun to connect with other friends in the community.

Clinton Roberts
Ice Rink Volunteer



“ Volunteering on the WRCA board provided me many opportunities to help shape our sense of community in ways that reinforce Maple Ridge and Willow Park being a safe and wonderful place to live. My interest to volunteer was initially sparked in 2017 by wanting to give-back to our community - without knowing specifically what or how that would be. I began on the board and soon learned of many opportunities and ways to positively contribute to our community. ”

Jennifer Kostiuk
Former Board Member



NOTE OF APPRECIATION

 We would like to acknowledge and thank the following individuals who helped us throughout the strategic planning process with their valuable time, skills and inputs.

Alexandra Best
Community Volunteer | WRCA

Andrea Ciurte
Strategy Volunteer | WRCA

AnneMarie Dorland
Former President | Chinook Park, Kelvin Grove,
Eagle Ridge Community Association

Carol Reitbauer
Former Treasurer | WRCA

Christine Dairon
Director, Sales & Marketing | Delta Hotels by Marriott
Calgary South

Danielle Dallaire
Vice Principal | École Notre-Dame-de-la-Paix

Debra Polischuk
Principal | St. William School

Gord Paynter
Past Vice President | WRCA

Harold Horsefall
Indigenous Relations Strategist | City of Calgary

Heather Brunette
Past Soccer Coordinator | WRCA

Janice Schneider
President | Parkland Community Association

Jeromy Farkas
Former Councillor, Ward 11 | City of Calgary

Katie Thorpe
Neighbourhood Partnership Coordinator | City of Calgary

Keith Simmons
Past President | Acadia Community Association

Margarita Lovo
Strategy Volunteer | WRCA

Dean Marklinger
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Mary Troicuk
Vice Chairperson | Hillhurst Sunnyside Community Association

Monica Paraschiv
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Paresh Thanawala
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Rich Cree
Volunteer Soccer Coordinator | WRCA

Rob Garnett
Centre Manager | Deer Run Community Association

Roger Lohrey
Former Board Member | WRCA

Steffan Gagne
Facility Supervisor | WRCA | Strategic Plan Graphic Designer

Additional thanks to our community staff, neighbours, and partners for their contributions.

NOTE OF APPRECIATION



CITY OF CALGARY

The City of Calgary is a long-time partner of the Willow Ridge Community Association. For over 50 years, they have provided a License of Occupation along with continuous support and guidance through their dedicated teams of community-minded professionals. Since the early 2000s, the City has provided over \$2.5 million in financial support through the Joint Use Coordinating Committee (JUCC) and the Capital Conservation Grant (CCG). These financial contributions have made it possible to provide quality facilities for the use of our community and deliver quality programs and services to our growing and changing demographic.

The City has also provided support throughout the COVID-19 pandemic through income and wage subsidy relief. We are grateful for this financial support which helped sustain employment opportunities in our community and made it possible for us to deliver select initiatives in 2020-2021.



GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA

The Government of Alberta, through the Community Facility Enhancement Program (CFEP), has provided approximately \$700,000 in grants which directly contributed to the renovation of our community centre. Our renovated building now offers one main hall, a secondary hall, a board room and plenty of room for childcare and even a future expansion space that could accommodate anything from sports to storage - there are many options available. It has also supported us through the annual charitable casino, which has been an important source of funding for our ongoing operations.

Recently renovated facilities also include our multi-sport rink, tennis courts, and our new pickleball court that was strategically built to accommodate players of this fast-growing sport in our neighbourhoods and surrounding communities.



GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

The Government of Canada, through the Western Economic Diversification Canada program, provided financial support of over \$1 million in 2019, a very important year in our history. With this financial support, we were able to make our project to renovate our community centre a reality. We were also able to hire specialists including engineers and architects to help us re-create a community centre that is designed to be welcoming and warm with its wooden accents. Our community centre now has ample spaces to deliver our programs and services and help build community.

CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS



Andrés E. Galindo
Strategy | Human Resources

Chris Nyberg
Casino Coordinator

Colleen Gnyp
Human Resources

Don Boykiw
President | Funding

Dustan Byrnes
Sports and Recreation

Gord Rouse
Civic Affair

Greg Humphreys
Civic Affairs | Past President

Haley Hartos
Funding

Jason Carling
Strategy | Civic Affairs

Kelly Edwards
Secretary

Kody Shiels
Treasurer

Martyn Bentley
Communications

Michael Krisa
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WRCA

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