



Recreation and Parks: Pathways to Community Well-Being and Vitality



Who is ARPA?

We are a provincial not-for-profit organization that builds healthy communities and citizens through recreation and parks in Alberta.

Alberta Recreation & Parks Association

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ABOUT MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMS, INITIATIVES & SERVICES EVENTS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES



Communities Facilities Parks & Nature

Our discussion today

- The benefits of recreation & parks and key areas of action from the new National Framework for Recreation in Canada
- Innovative examples of how municipalities are investing in the well-being of their communities through recreation & parks



- Resources available to support the quality of life and the sustainability of Alberta's municipalities



The Power of Recreation

Is your community a place where people want to live, work, learn and play? Does it offer a **good quality of life** and **support well-being**? How do you know?

There are many challenges to communities today, like an aging population, infrastructure deficits, chronic disease, social disconnection, and climate change.



Young people are also thinking more than ever about where they want to live before choosing a job.



Soul of a Community

Knight Soul of the Community (SOTC) is a three-year study conducted by Gallup of the 26 John S. and James L. Knight Foundation communities across the United States.

They discovered that residents are most attached to their communities when:

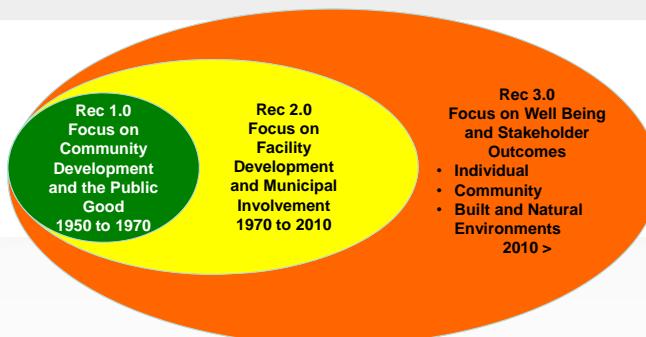
- they have fun places to gather,
- there's a welcoming atmosphere and
- there are beautiful and green spaces to enjoy

And... positive feelings about a community do have a connection to local GDP growth over a longer-term period.

<http://knightfoundation.org/sotc/>



Recreation's New Strategic Challenge: Delivering *Outcomes* to Meet *Stakeholder Expectations*



Graphic courtesy of Yates, Thorn & Associates and futureInnovate



Is this your community?

- The Recreation and Parks “status quo” in your community is optimal for the future
- Everyone already agrees on the Parks and Recreation strategy for the future and how to get there
- Your community’s Parks and Recreation infrastructure is already perfect
- Everyone in your community is active, healthy and already having too much fun
- Parks and Recreation is already contributing optimally to quality of life, economic development, sports tourism, development of athletes of all ages, and attracting and retaining families and citizens who will be the leaders of tomorrow
- All your Parks and Recreation staff agree that their compensation levels are perfect and they don’t want any more benefits
- Your funding levels for Parks and Recreation are ideal and you couldn’t productively allocate any additional funding
- You have already implemented all Parks and Recreation-related best practices

Or is this *really* your community?

- Change will be necessary to ensure that Parks and Recreation is contributing optimally to community well-being achieving optimal outcomes for all key stakeholders
- There is debate about the Parks and Recreation strategy for the future and how to get there
- Your community’s Parks and Recreation infrastructure could use some improvement and decisions need to be made about how to allocate infrastructure investment in the optimal way
- Not everyone in your community is active, healthy or having enough fun
- Parks and Recreation could do more to contribute to quality of life, economic development, sports tourism, development of athletes of all ages, and attracting and retaining families and citizens who will be the leaders of tomorrow
- You are not certain whether Parks and Recreation staff are compensated equitably in relation to peers across the province
- To achieve optimal outcomes, additional investment is needed in Parks and Recreation but the business case for that investment is not yet embraced by all relevant decision-makers
- There is room for improvement your community’s implementation of Parks and Recreation-related best practices

**So how do we know whether or not
our actions are making an impact?**

Or

**The impact that our communities
really need?**



**A Framework for Recreation in Canada
2015: Pathways to Wellbeing**

- Active Living
- Inclusion and Access
- Connecting People and Nature
- Supportive Environments
- Recreation Capacity



A Story from Calling Lake



- Connecting People and Nature
- Recreation Capacity



A Story from Longview



- Active Living
- Inclusion and Access



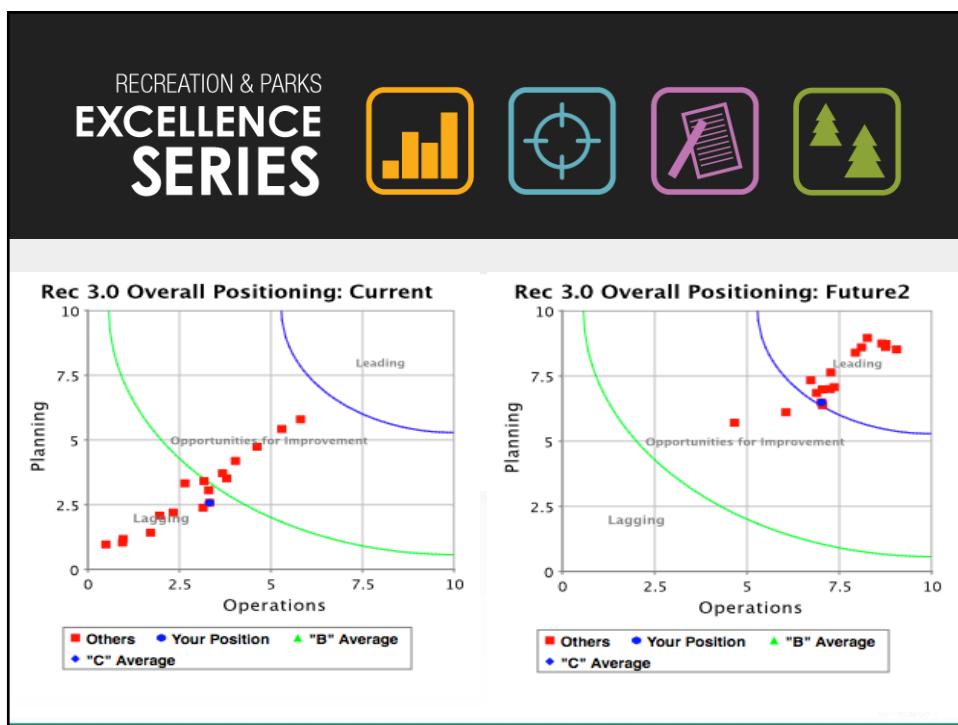


RecExcel

- Provides communities with the ability to assess their services against 10 core competencies and begin to map out future planning.
- Multiple users can provide their input on the community's current position.
- Reports identify the community's strengths, weaknesses, and future priorities, as well as comparisons to peer communities



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A Story from St. Albert



● Supportive Environments

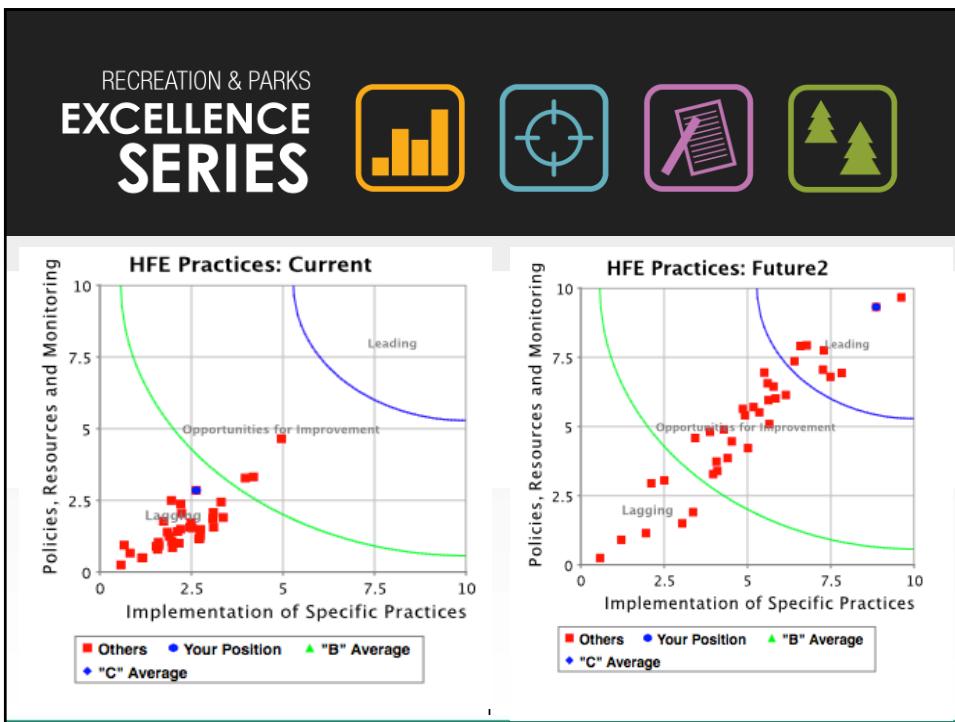


RecFocus

RecFocus 'Healthy Food Environments' module is an initiative to gather data about the state of food environments in Alberta recreation facilities and communities.

This work will inform future efforts to develop healthy food environments in recreation facilities across AB.







RecFocus

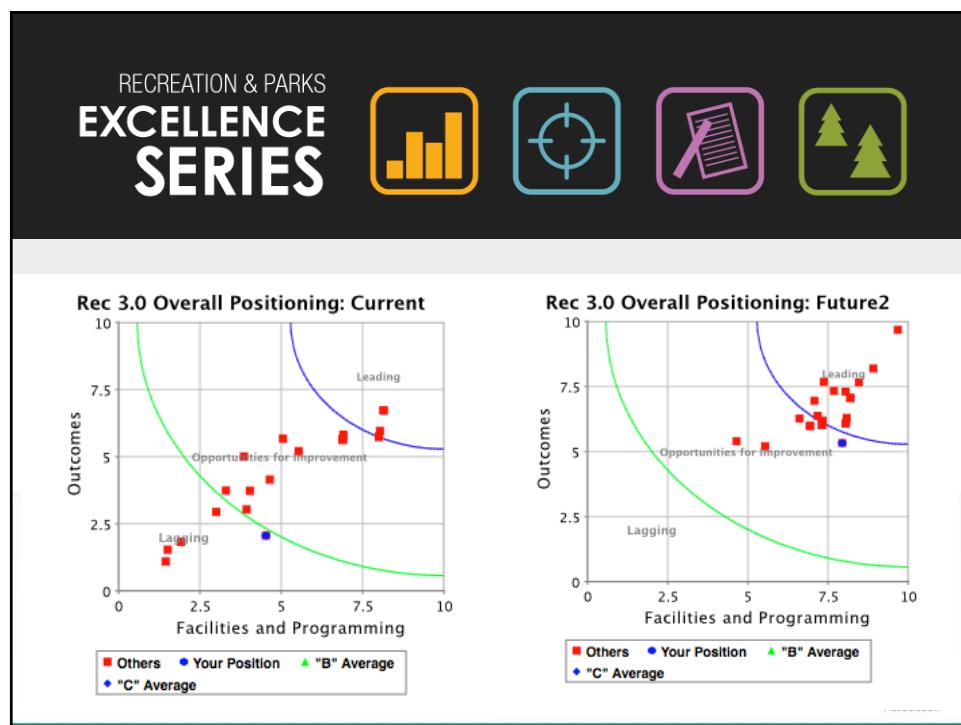
A series of additional services for facility-specific drill-down of hard data and best practice assessment. RecFocus allows for comparative data for individual facility types as well as a community view for more comprehensive reporting.

Currently in operation:

INDOOR POOLS
ARENAS



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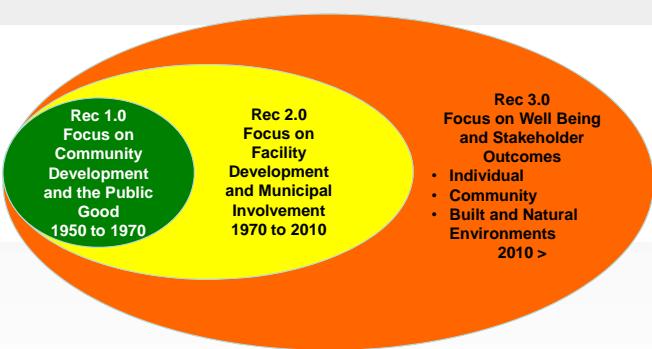
Yardstick

- An industry-driven parks and green space audit
- Provides communities with a comparison of their current operational status to other organizations
- Local and international outlooks
- Includes: **Benchmarks & Visitor Surveys**

YARDSTICK 


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Recreation's Strategic Challenge Revisited: Delivering *Outcomes* to Meet Stakeholder Expectations



Graphic courtesy of Yates, Thorn & Associates and futureInnovate


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Delivering Recreation Outcomes

Recreation and parks are essential to:

- **Health:** enabling citizens of all ages to be active and maintain or improve health
- **Well-being:** bringing people together for purposeful fun in attractive facilities and natural spaces
- **Economic development:** keeping existing businesses and attracting new ones through quality of life, attracting visitors through sports and recreation tourism
- **Social connectedness:** building cohesiveness and shared purpose through involvement in recreation
- **Leadership:** mobilizing the leaders of today to shape the leaders of tomorrow

What outcomes are most important in your community?



ARPA Excellence Series: Strategic initiative to help municipal officials deliver recreation outcomes over the next decade

	Focus	Result for participants
RecMetrics	Finance, facilities, human resources	More informed resource allocation decisions
RecFocus	Drill-down insights into specific facilities (pools, arenas, etc.) and specific issues affecting stakeholder outcomes (HFE, diversity, etc.)	Improved performance of facilities Improved strategic response to key issues affecting stakeholder outcomes
RecExcel	Achieving excellence through best practices: where we are, where we need to be, how to get there	Enhanced ability to recognize short and long-term performance gaps, plan and manage change to close gaps over time



