

ARGYLE RECREATION COMMISSION STRATEGIC PLAN

2014-2017



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Summary

In January 2013, the Argyle Municipal Recreation Commission, under the facilitation of Debby Smith, South Shore regional rep for Nova Scotia Health and Wellness, began the process of a strategic plan for the recreation department. After completing four different meetings and taking inventory of our surrounding and identifying priorities, the Argyle Recreation Commission had the framework laid out for a five year Strategic Plan.

Included in this process was a review of the Argyle Recreation Commission's vision and mission. The vision for the Argyle Recreation Commission is:

"We envision a community where people of all abilities, experience the joy and the freedom to be found through daily participation in a wide variety of unstructured and structured opportunities for play, recreation and physical activity in our beautiful natural surroundings, recreation spaces and quality facilities. Individuals appreciate the benefits of recreation and are aware of the opportunities. Leaders and community organizations collaborate to provide recreation opportunities for the youngest to the eldest in all seasons of the year."

Their mission statement is:

It is critical for the Argyle Recreation Department to have improved results in the following areas:

- Participation in recreation activities
- Access to recreation opportunities
- Client and public safety
- Impact on healthy lifestyles
- Customer satisfaction
- Costs
- Revenue
- Condition of finances
- Number of volunteers and volunteer satisfaction
- Quality leaders
- Quality and condition of facilities
- Access to infrastructure
- Connection to nature
- Awareness of benefits and opportunities
- Community representation

After taking a closer look at strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and the threats of the internal organizations, the Commission members took a look at the social, economic, political and technological changes that affected recreation in some form.

Six critical issues were identified.

1. Lack of quality infrastructure.
2. Access to infrastructure.
3. Lack of outdoor play.
4. Awareness of local opportunities.
5. Awareness of the benefits of recreation.
6. Lack of community representation on Commission.

Six goals were identified.

1. Increase participation in recreation activities.
2. Improve access to recreation infrastructure.
3. Improve quality and quantity of facilities.
4. Increase awareness of the benefits and opportunities.
5. Improve access to recreation opportunities.
6. Improve connection to nature.

S.W.O.T. Analysis

Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats

Strengths

Good staff, operate as a team
Unlimited supply of volunteers
Strong support from Council
Strategic plan is in place
Partnerships with neighbors
Facilities that are maintained
MPAL initiative is in place
Small community with pride
Quality recreation programs
Technology support and use
Flexible work times

Opportunities

Nicest natural sites
Wind farm = trail use
2 high schools
Use of social media to get word out
Supportive businesses
Renewal of Community Use agreement
Access Provincial grants
4 elementary schools/good relations
A health club in community
Good leaders and potential leaders

Weaknesses

No admin staff
Lack of recreation infrastructure
Gaps/long distances to facilities
Large geographic area to serve
No large concentration of folks
Promotion is weak
Budget constraints

Threats

Aging population
Perceived negatives of wind farm
Difficult to control social media
Federal summer grant cuts
Decrease in population
Increase in the use of screen time
Insurance costs/risk management
Out migration of young people
Decline in the economy/fishery
Cost of participation is high

Social-Economic-Political-Technological

Changes

Social Changes

- *Decrease in the population in the Municipality of the District of Argyle
- *Becoming more of a retirement community
- *Fewer children being born-more split classes
- *Increase in the number of single parent families
- *Large senior population
- *Decrease in the time families spend together
- *Increase in participation in structured recreation
- *Increase in families with both parents working
- *Fewer children and youth playing outdoors
- *Rural life, still slower paced
- *Increase in diversity in the community

Economic Changes

- *Decrease in discretionary dollars
- *Loss of local jobs
- *Poor eating habits due to costs of healthy foods
- *Unstable fishery of all stocks
- *Outward migration of families and workers
- *No affordable transit: in and out of community
- *Retail businesses hit hard
- *Families separating for work opportunities
- *Buying on credit is new reality
- *Decrease in income, not accepted as new reality
- *Increase in the cost of living without parallel income

Political Changes

- *Urban centric provincial perspective
- *We are the “forgotten end” of the Province of Nova Scotia
- *Improvements in Municipal Government communication
- *A growing sense the Municipality is starting to look to the future
- *Increase in co-operation among municipal governments
- *With new Provincial boundaries, wondering how that will affect language, culture, traditions.

Technological Changes

- *Increase in use of and potential for wind energy
- *Increase in use of social media as communications tools
- *Increase in time spent in front of screens
- *Increase in on-line learning opportunities
- *Less face to face time
- *More video game use-so less time spent outdoors
- *Seniors can access physical activity and learning opportunities
- *Decreases ability to write and express ourselves
- *Decrease in social skills

GOAL # 1: TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION IN RECREATION ACTIVITIES

Objectives	Strategic Plan	Action Plan	Lead	Timeline
Objective 1.1 Identify specific target groups and carry out needs assessment.	Develop a needs assessment tool. MPAL citizen survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Survey senior groups → Interview/ survey general public using Survey Monkey → Survey youth in school using Survey Monkey → Use data from citizen survey for Physical Activity Strategic Plan -refresh 	Active Living Coordinator	Fall 2014 Ongoing
Objective 1.2 Develop a plan to increase awareness of the benefits of recreation and physical activity.	Develop an information/ media package promoting the benefits of recreation and physical activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Use Monitors in school entrance to relay the message. → Use the Active Living Facebook page to promote the benefits → Promote benefits of PA on Municipal website and Municipal newsletter. 	Active Living Coordinator	Spring 2014 Ongoing
Objective 1.3 Link timing of activities to target groups.	Develop a plan for specific groups and identify the best time and day to better serve the needs of the target group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Add timing question to needs assessment to determine what the best time for specific target group. → Schedule activities and events accordingly. 	Rec Director	Fall 2015
Objective 1.4 Increase use of Facebook to promote and link it to the website.	Develop a plan to promote Active Living Facebook page.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Use Facebook page to promote PA programs and event. → Involve the school's sports schedule and results on the AL Facebook page. → Link AL Facebook page to Municipal Website. → Promote the AL Facebook page on all information pamphlets and brochures of the recreation department. 	Active Living Coordinator	Fall 2013 & ongoing
Objective 1.5 Increase connections with community and schools.	Develop a relationship with school officials of the Tri-County School Board and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Spend time in schools to create visibility and build relationships. → Work with school officials to create and update community use agreements. 	Recreation Director	Winter 2015

	CSAP to increase community use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Use school facilities for recreation and physical activity programs on a regular basis. → Incorporate all aspect of the school facilities in community use agreements i.e. fitness rooms available for community use. 		
Objective 1.6 Provide home/community based opportunities.	Identify recreation facilities and community champions in each community. Create a resource list.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Working with South Shore Connect. → Gathering information regarding Active Living opportunities in the Municipality of Argyle. 	Active Living Coordinator	Summer 2014 & Ongoing
Objective 1.7 Provide affordable opportunities – review fee schedule.	Review programs and fees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Awareness program around Jump Start/ Kid Sports fund. → Direct to South Shore Connect on Recreation Promotion. 	Recreation Director	Winter 2015
Objective 1.8 Increase opportunities for families.	To provide and promote family events and activities throughout the year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Review information gathered from needs assessment. → Using the needs assessment information and knowledge create a plan for family events → Create a promotional plan for these family events 	Rec Director	Spring 2015
Objective 1.9 Explore “apps” as a way to promote activities.	Determine whether an “app” to promote recreation and physical activities is feasible and available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Contact other organizations to see if they are using such technology. → Research an “app” for promotion of recreation events and programs. → Present the “app” if available to ARC for a decision. 	Information technologist	Fall 2016

GOAL #2: IMPROVE ACCESS TO RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Objectives	Strategic Plan	Action Plan	Lead	Timeline
Objective 2.1 Promote current infrastructure through social media, improved signage and schools.	Upgrade infrastructure for promotion. Create signage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Use of media to update residents on current infrastructure. → Highlight activities on Active Living Facebook Page- make use of pictures on Facebook. 	Recreation Director	Spring 2014 ongoing
Objective 2.2 Provide free recreational opportunities.	Target senior and family activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → To provide at least 6 free activities per year. 	Recreation Director	2013 & ongoing
Objective 2.3 Develop clubs to support existing infrastructure.	Help support Yarmouth County athletic club Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Offer run, jump, and throw to help increase the coaching capacity of track and field. → Involve girls' softball program in a league. 	Active Living Coordinator	2015
Objective 2.4 Host tournaments to boost participation.	Evaluate what facilities could be used for tournaments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Summer ball hockey tournaments at Par-en-Bas and Plymouth courts. → Support old time baseball tournaments at Tusket field → Tennis clinics on new surfaces. 	Recreation Director	2016
Objective 2.5 Identify gaps in infrastructure/ develop plan consider all ages.	The inventory of usage on our infrastructures. Do we serve all ages?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Take action to provide opportunity for all ages if not already doing so. 	Recreation Director	2015
Objective 2.6 Increase the number of community use of schools agreements.	Communicate with school principal the importance of community use agreement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → To establish a formal joint use agreement with at least one other school in our municipality from CSAP school Board. → Revisit and sign the current agreement. 	Recreation Director	2016
Objective 2.7 Increase use of subsidy/support programs.	To create a budget line for subsidy/ support programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → To add a recreation budget line that identifies subsidy/support program for P.A. Program and leadership. 	Recreation Director	2015 Budget line in Active Living for Leadership development in 2014-15
Objective 2.8 Promote facilities through existing clubs/groups/ associations.	Create an information package to be distributed. Promote Southshoreconnect.ca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → When presenting to groups and organizations distribute the information package to the members → Use Municipal website to promote our facilities. → Encourage & promote southshoreconnect.ca on all recreation promotional material 	Recreation Director	2016

GOAL # 3: TO IMPROVE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF FACILITIES

Objectives	Strategic Plan	Action plan	Lead	Timeline
Objective 3.1 Inventory of existing facilities and identify needs for upgrades and new development.	To have an ARC yearly priority planning session to identify the infrastructure yearly repairs for budgeting.	→ One year plan of action for upgrades to Municipal Infrastructure presented to Council.	Recreation Director	2014 Ongoing
Objective 3.2 Identify sources of funding for facility development.	Keep in communication with the DHW, SNS and other depts. in regards to grants for facility development.	→ Identify which facility is in need and apply for appropriate funding.	Recreation Director	2014 & ongoing
Objective 3.3 Work with community volunteers/clubs/organizations to support their facility development.	Identify which community or community group is in need of support.	→ Work with group to apply for funding. → Help lead needs assessment if needed i.e. East Pubnico. → Support new rec or PA groups/clubs/initiatives	Recreation Director	2017
Objective 3.4 Increase Council support through a facility development plan.	ARC to develop a plan for facility development	→ Presentation of the facility development plan to council	Recreation Director	2017
Objective 3.5 Carry out a safety audit of existing facilities – plan for improvement.	Make a safety check document for maintenance person.	→ PWD to carry out and report any unsafe facility. → Talk to community users to identify unsafe areas.	Director of Public works	2015
Objective 3.6 Establish community use of school agreements.	Communicate with school principal the importance of a Community Use Agreement	→ Begin the process with school boards	Recreation Director	2015
Objective 3.7 Develop a comprehensive annual maintenance plan.	Review with maintenance staff and ARC members to determine the plan of action	→ Identify what materials we need to carry out proper maintenance → Include maintenance line budget in recreation. → Communicate with groups using the facilities	Recreation Director	Spring 2015

GOAL # 4: TO INCREASE THE AWARENESS OF THE BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Objectives	Strategic Plan	Action Plan	Lead	Timeline
Objective 4.1 Develop an education strategy/identify specific target, media, and resources.	To develop an education package to be used through our promotional resources, FB, newsletter, Twitter	→ Develop brochures, Info package and resource materials for all ages groups	Active Living Coordinator	Fall 2015
Objective 4.2 Host workshops with special guests.	Identify needs in our municipality. Use data collected from citizen survey for MPAL strategic Plan	→ CPR for seniors, food handlers for volunteers. → Organize workshops to meet the needs	Recreation Director	2014 & ongoing
Objective 4.3 Increase promotion of opportunities using social media, newsletters, municipal website.	Create Facebook page, increase visibility on municipal website by use of recreation calendar and use of municipal newsletter.	→ Promote all recreation and P.A. opportunities on Facebook, website and municipal newsletter as well as mass email. Promote other PA. and recreation opportunities in surrounding communities.	Active Living Coordinator	2013 & Ongoing
Objective 4.4 Create a champion initiative: role models in the communities.	Find champions in communities of the Municipality	→ Feature community champs on Facebook newsletter. → Communicate and work to improve PA opportunities in community	Active Living Coordinator	2013 & Ongoing
Objective 4.5 Go to existing organizations to present benefits and opportunities on their agenda.	Identify organization contacts. Ask to be invited to one of their meeting.	→ Make list of organizations in the Municipality. → Make contact with the lead of the organizations. → Create an education session to be presented.	Recreation Director	Fall 2015
Objective 4.6 Partner with schools to train teams of older students to work with younger children and develop a peer mentorship initiative.	Junior leadership program at day camps. Facilitate MAP/PAL Program for elementary/high school Bring NCCP courses to the school	→ Identify NCCP trainer or train a trainer willing to teach schools. → Help organize a Physical Activity leadership program in our elementary schools each year. → Begin a junior leader program for day camps.	Active Living Coordinator	Summer 2015

GOAL # 5: TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO RECREATION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OPPORTUNITIES

Objectives	Strategic Plan	Action Plan	Lead	Timeline
Objective 5.1 Promote opportunities through social media, media, schools, recreation department and www.southshoreconnect.ca	Active Living Coordinator to help identify recreation, P.A groups and business in the municipality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Active Living Coordinator to work with South Shore Connect to make sure we are on the map. → Help promote southshoreconnect.ca official launch. 	Active Living Coordinator	2014 & ongoing
Objective 5.2 Provide programming that is affordable/low/no cost.	Most of the Argyle Recreation Commission programs are low costs if possible, especially for Seniors and Children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Identify high cost programs. → Prepare budget to offset cost 	Recreation Director	2014 & ongoing
Objective 5.3 Promote support organizations: Jumpstart, Kidsport, etc	Update Brochures and resources for these programs – increase promotion. Promotion of these programs through Southshoreconnect.ca .	→ These programs should be referred to on all applicable program info, website, Facebook etc.	Recreation Director	Fall 2015
Objective 5.4 Provide programs for diverse age groups.	Take inventory of present programs and identify gaps in the programming areas.	→ Provide programs for all age groups on an equal basis.	Recreation Director	2016
Objective 5.6 To provide funding for transportation / equipment for school teams.	Argyle Recreation Commission determine the need for funding for schools sports teams.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Advocate to municipal council the importance of support for school sports. → Budget expense line for recreation. 	Recreation Director	2016
Objective 5.7 Increase after-school programming.	With the increase in youth leadership after school programming will increase.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → More training available for after school programming. → Funds available to help support training for leaders. 	Recreation Director	Fall 2016

GOAL # 6: TO IMPROVE CONNECTION TO NATURE

Objectives	Strategic Plan	Action Plan	Lead	Timeline
Objective 6.1 Maintain/improve relationship with departments connected to nature: Natural Resources/Health and Wellness/Tourism.	Seek leadership funding to provide support and training for outdoor play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Continue communication with Department of Health & Wellness for training opportunities. → Connect with the Department of Natural Resources to seek info on leadership training for youth 	Recreation Director	Spring 2017
Objective 6.2 Support community and school recreation programs connected to the outdoors.	Connect with Schools Plus (École Plus) to have conversation around outdoor play.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Partner with Schools Plus (École Plus) to provide at least one outdoor recreation program per year. 	Recreation Director	2016
Objective 6.3 Link with schools to promote orienteering/geo-caching.	Communication with school PE teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Identify orienteering and Geocaching leaders and have them lead a session per year. 	Recreation Director	2015
Objective 6.4 Program activities on the trails (fun run, competitions, triathlons).	To make use of our trails in the Municipality of Argyle through recreation and PA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → To have at least one fun run on trails → Promote the walking groups and their use of trails to walk. → Promote Trail day activities. 	Active Living Coordinator	2013 & Ongoing
Objective 6.5 Identify and promote outdoor champions.	Find champions in communities of the Municipality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Feature community champs on Facebook newsletter. → Communicate and work to improve PA opportunities in community 	Active Living Coordinator	2014 & ongoing
Objective 6.6 Annual maintenance plan for outdoor facilities.	Review with maintenance staff and ARC members to determine the plan of action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → One year plan of action for upgrades to Municipal Infrastructure presented to Council 	Recreation Director	2015
Objective 6.7 Develop the outdoor data needed to populate South Shore Connect.ca	Take inventory of the outdoor resources in the Municipality of Argyle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Convey the information gathered on outdoor P.A. and Recreation opportunities to South Shore Connect data specialist 	Active Living Coordinator	2015