

CPRA. Renewed Direction. Transformed Vision. Fresh Future.

There is a proposal for a restructured parks and recreation field in Canada **prepared** by the Partnership Agreement Renewal Task Group (PARTG), a group set up jointly by CPRA and its Provincial/Territorial Association Partners. The Alberta Recreation and Parks Association has prepared this briefing about the proposal for restructuring CPRA and improving its relationship with its provincial and territorial partners for consideration by all parties in the field and our members.

The CPRA and its provincial/territorial partners created PARTG in 2007 to better serve the parks and recreation field in Canada by improving relationships among and between the national and provincial/territorial partners. The original mandate was to focus on the various national/provincial-territorial partnership agreements and recommend improvements. During this process, however, many of the parties wanted a more thorough review of the relationship and broader levels of structural and operational improvements. What developed included a proposal for restructuring the formal organizational elements of the parks and recreation field to effect the improvements. The final proposal reflects this.

- If you are attending the World Leisure Congress in Quebec City, please advise ARPA, as we would like to arrange a “meet and greet”, if possible.

Key Points

Changes to the parks and recreation field are occurring and this proposed Alliance responds.

This is still simply a proposal.

ARPA’s Executive Committee has endorsed the proposal in principle. It will be considered by the ARPA Board of Directors during its September 12th/ 13th meeting.

The intent is that all parties can decide if they support in principle the new relationship and new structure. It is hoped this might occur during the World Leisure Congress and CPRA Annual General Meeting in Quebec City in October.

If this proposal is supported in principle there is anticipation that the PARTG would be dissolved and another body, called for discussion purposes only a Transition Team, would take over to further the process along.

Restructuring and Repositioning the Field

The Canadian parks and recreation field will continue to have two levels of organizations.

A new organization will be called the Canadian Parks and Recreation Alliance (CPRA) and will be referred to as the Alliance or the new CPRA.

The Alliance will be the “voice for the parks and recreation field” at the national level.

Each province or territory will have one organization to represent the field (its P/T Association) and to be its voice within that province or territory.

The Alliance will continue to be a not-for-profit society with charitable status but will be altered to become an alliance of provincial/territorial partner associations much like most of the national sport governing bodies or the Lifesaving Society of Canada.

With the new model, there will be stronger and seamless connections between the two levels with positioning to be two parts of a whole instead of separate rather unconnected entities.

Primary mandates/Outward oriented roles:

- Advocate for the field nationally (on issues of major concern in much or all of the country),
- Promote a national research agenda (to support advocacy and to improve the practices in the field),
- Develop and ratify national policies and standards (where a national standard, best practice, or approach is appropriate and helpful),
- Liaise and collaborate with other national and international organizations that are aligned with or share parts of the CPRA mandate (to expand its influence and relevance, and support its national advocacy role).

Secondary activities/Inward oriented roles.

These would be dependent on resources and decisions by the new CPRA Board of Directors and could include:

- Provide a national clearing house of important information regarding the field (this is largely communication within the field and among members),
- Provide support for and nurture the creation of P/T Associations where they need help,
- Identify and facilitate synergies between P/T Associations (where one can help or support others),
- Host national forums on topics that will support its research and advocacy roles,
- Manage an awards program (a recognition of and advancement of best practices and people).

Both of the above sets of roles relate to an outward oriented organization that is working to support and further the field in general and to influence others outside the field.

The outward focus (represented by the first four bullets above) needs to be prioritized by the new Alliance, as PARTG believes that efforts to build awareness, educate and to advocate cannot be jeopardized by the need to deliver member services.

Financial Considerations

The new CPRA revenues would be derived from membership fees, from services it provides and from grants, just as the existing CPRA does now: but with appropriate provision for the primary benefits which the P/T Associations have identified as most needed in the Alliance; namely advocacy, national policy/standards, research, networking with other national and international organizations, and acting as a clearing house of national information.

Each of the P/T Associations would continue to operate their associations as they do now and finance them as they see fit. There would be no change in how P/T Associations are financed at the provincial/territorial level.

P/T Associations would pay an annual fee for membership in CPRA. That fee would be determined by a formula, which would recognize the unique structure of its general membership, and the ability to pay of each P/T Association partner.

At the commencement of the new CPRA, the intent would be for it to be debt free. Its financial position would need to be completely clear and transparent.

Forward looking

What the field needs at the provincial/territorial level will vary by area and time, with each of the P/T Associations determining what is appropriate for their respective jurisdictions.

No changes are recommended in this proposal at the provincial/territorial level in membership services or Association membership.

The new CPRA will identify the needs of members for service and projects and may develop services and initiatives to meet those needs.

In future, services could be added or deleted as needs change.

PARTG believes there are many advantages that result from this new relationship and structure.

For further details, please refer directly to the full proposal:

For additional information or clarifications, please contact Dr. Tim Burton (ARPA's representative on the PARTG) or any other member of ARPA's Executive Committee and/or Rick Curtis, ARPA Executive Director.

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