



Creating Community: An Action Plan for Parks and Recreation

California Parks and Recreation Society (CPRS)

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When municipal monies shrink, park and recreation departments look for new ways to develop their operations and budgets. Park and recreation professionals need to learn how to go after their market share so their departments can continue to expand and compete with other community services.

That's where *Creating Community: An Action Plan for Parks and Recreation* comes in. You can use this text as a blueprint for achieving your vision for your park and recreation department by implementing the VIP (vision, insight, and planning) action plan as created by the California Park & Recreation Society. This text will help you

- position your department to increase, rather than decrease, your budget;
- implement a strategic plan with measurable outcomes; and
- reposition your department as a key player in developing and supporting the community.

Creating Community presents 22 core competencies that will help park and recreation professionals (and those preparing to become professionals) perform better and work more effectively in a rapidly changing society. As such, this book serves as an all-in-one resource for working professionals and as vital preparation for pre-professionals.

The book shows you step by step how to implement a VIP (vision, insight, and planning) action plan, from vision to strategic planning to implementation and it provides the framework to develop a communications plan that works in all sectors and settings. It also provides 15 easy-to-use worksheets and forms to help you prepare, implement, and communicate your VIP plan to your community. This thoroughly tested VIP plan was the catalyst for a successful fiscal turnaround for park and recreation departments throughout California.

Part I describes the VIP action plan and identifies the 22 core competencies for the profession. It provides 8 strategies with detailed implementation lists that will help you start using the plan right away, and it presents all of the background information and tools you will need in order to create a plan specific to your community. You'll also find practical tools, such as forms and checklists to use in planning and implementing your VIP project, real-world examples of how other agencies have put the plan to work, and tips on researching your local audience to develop appropriate programs. **Part II** focuses on the communication aspects of the plan, showing you how to make a case for your programs by communicating to policy makers, residents, and other decision makers in your community. It describes the 7 steps to creating a communications plan and gives examples of how effective plans work. You'll learn how to write press releases, create media kits, plan a press conference, choose a spokesperson, and give interviews. You'll also find information on using other media outlets, including op-eds and letters to the editor, radio and TV talk shows, PSAs, and the Internet.

Creating Community: An Action Plan for Parks and Recreation is a road map that current and future professionals can use to shape their careers and that departments can use to flourish. It provides a tested model that adapts well to any setting and that will help you increase department funding and secure jobs now and for the future.

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