



**Three Rivers
Rowing
Association**



Our Strategic Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2013 - 2018

Throughout the fall and winter of 2012 and 2013, Three Rivers Rowing Association's board and staff worked together to create a strategic course that would allow the organization to focus over the next five years.

The Pittsburgh-based firm of Jackson/Clark Partners was selected to guide staff and board through a comprehensive strategic planning process. A key goal was to create a strategic plan for which the TRRA team can feel ownership and to provide a clear path toward implementation. The planning team worked hard to foster collaboration, build consensus and generate buy-in—directly engaging staff, board and key partners at every step.

Three Rivers Rowing Association (TRRA) is a registered nonprofit 501(c)(3) committed to improving access to Pittsburgh's rivers through its two facilities—the Washington's Landing boathouse and the Millvale boathouse—and to providing programs and events for recreational and competitive rowing and paddling opportunities for the community.

BUILDING ON OUR SUCCESS

Since 1984, TRRA has been providing the community with exciting opportunities to engage with one of our region's greatest assets as a source of recreation, health and personal enrichment.

Core programs include:

Adaptive Rowing and Paddling

A unique program aimed at novice and experienced rowers and paddlers who have physical or mental disabilities or are hearing or visually impaired.

Urban Youth Programs

- First Row is a rowing program committed to engaging Pittsburgh's urban high school girls in a community rowing program that cultivates self-discipline, confidence, team-building and improved health.
- Paddlers for Peace is a summer Dragon Boat league partnered with Communities in Action for Peace aimed at teaching youth the benefits of working with a team, developing leadership skills and promoting non-violence.
- Rowing and Paddling Field Trips provide youth groups, camps and local organizations/schools with an introduction to rowing and paddling through one-day group events.

Corporate Rowing League for Adults

A recreational summer rowing league for businesses looking to promote fitness among their employees. The program also provides individuals with the chance to participate as well. Beginners and experienced rowers are both served.

Youth and College Rowing

- Eight local high school teams—Central Catholic, Oakland Catholic, North Catholic, Allderdice, Mt. Lebanon, Upper St. Clair, Hampton, Fox Chapel—and three local colleges—University of Pittsburgh, Carnegie Mellon, Duquesne University—row from the TRRA facilities.
- TRRA's Junior rowing team, TRJR, has eighty 8-12th grade rowers from all over the Pittsburgh area.
- The USRowing Junior Men's National Team Camp is hosted at TRRA each summer to train sixty high school athletes for national and international rowing competitions.

Adult Rowing and Paddling Teams

TRRA has six year-round masters (21+) rowing teams for all experience levels and one Dragon Boat team for anyone interested in competitive dragon boating.

Rowing and Paddling for Beginners

Year-round programs for adults and youth beginners to experience rowing or paddling on the water or inside one of TRRA's two facilities. Free opportunities are offered for people to try rowing or paddling once or get involved with a program or team.

Events

- Head of the Ohio (HOTO) is a signature event and one of the largest single-day rowing events in the country with over 2000 rowers participating and over 2000 spectators.
- Pittsburgh Indoor Rowing Championships is an indoor rowing race for youth, college and masters rowers.
- Dragon boat races have been held in conjunction with the Three Rivers Regatta.

OUR STRATEGIC FOCUS

- 1. Build a unified community among our team of staff, board, members, coaches and volunteers**
- 2. Build a more connected community of people who love to row and paddle**
- 3. Build a dedicated community of fit, active people of all ages, backgrounds and skill levels**



Where We Are AN OVERVIEW OF OUR ORGANIZATION

OUR CURRENT STRUCTURE

Three Rivers Rowing Association has an annual operating budget of \$900,000 and operates under the direction of a 15 person Board of Directors, including a five person executive committee. Staff consists of four full-time positions, operating out of two boathouses, one on Washington's Landing in Pittsburgh and one located across the back-channel in Millvale. Board capacity is augmented by an 18 person advisory Board of Governors, which includes previous board presidents and the organization's founders.

WHAT OUR MEMBERS SAID

As part of the planning process, JCP and TRRA developed a comprehensive members' survey that was sent to the full TRRA membership base. The goal of the survey was to gain a deeper understanding of needs, opportunities, and focus areas of TRRA members, and use the information to inform organizational planning, priorities, and next steps.

150 individuals completed the on-line survey, which included 14 questions. The average age of respondents was between 35-55, and approximately 49% of respondents have been active members for 5 years or more. Most respondents, 55-60%, were introduced to the organization through word-of-mouth.

More than half the respondents, 52%, were competitive rowers, while an average of 21% of respondents were recreational rowers. About 22% of respondents were competitive paddlers, while only 7% responded that they paddled recreationally. A large percentage of respondents, about 75%, use the facilities to train/exercise, and 26% responded that they store their boat(s) at the facilities.

Generally, respondents were very satisfied with the organization, their membership, and the teams. Most respondents added that the camaraderie of other members, the professionalism and availability of the staff, and friendly atmosphere of the boathouses are what drive them to retain their membership with the organization. Respondents thought policies and procedures were thoughtfully developed and well-maintained. Diversity in membership and participants was a noted strong suit of the organization.

The majority of members noted that the facilities, including both boathouses and training equipment, need to be better maintained. General upkeep, locker room organization and cleanliness, repairing or replacing damaged equipment, and a more clear/transparent schedule of membership activities and space/equipment usage were suggested as first steps towards improvement.

77% of respondents identified themselves as active volunteers in supporting the organization with activities ranging from upkeep of the boathouses, event organization, race season participation and web design. 47% of respondents donate to the organization through Day of Giving, and 19% give through the TRRA annual campaign. 25% of respondents give between \$100-\$500 annually. Conversely, 22% identified themselves as non-givers.

In addition to our members' survey, 25 individuals were interviewed as a part of our Strategic Planning process, both from within the organization as well as external partners and supporters. Interviews were given an opportunity to speak openly and candidly about their experience with Three Rivers Rowing, and provided a comprehensive overview of where we have been, where we are and opportunities for moving forward.

Compiled, the contents of the interview outcomes covered topics including:

- OPERATIONS
- FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT
- OUR TEAM
- FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIPS
- EXTERNAL MARKET
- MEMBERSHIP
- MISSION AND VISION
- MARKETING/COMMUNICATIONS
- PROGRAMS

Throughout the planning process, TRRA was able to gain clear insight into some of our organization's challenges. As such, our team remains committed to addressing these challenges, and to adopting a mode of continuous improvement as we move forward.

Where We Are Headed

OUR FOCUS AND FOUNDATION

Since 1984, Three Rivers Rowing Association has been improving Pittsburgh's access to our rivers through facilities, programs and events that provide recreational and competitive rowing and paddling for the community. Over the coming years, we will build on our history and sustain our success by strengthening our organization and our community connections. Our focus will be to build a stronger community: within our organization, among and between people who love to row and paddle and in our region.

A stronger organization

We are building a unified community among our team of staff, board, members, coaches and volunteers

A stronger rowing and paddling community

We are building a more connected community of people who love to row and paddle

A stronger region

We are building a dedicated community of fit, active people of all ages, backgrounds and skill levels

OUR VALUES

FITNESS We take care of ourselves, our community and each other

EXCELLENCE We are driven to do and be our best

DIVERSITY & INCLUSIVENESS We have a place for everyone

UNITY We believe in the power of teamwork

SAFETY We make safety and security a priority

COLLABORATION We share our skills and knowledge

RESPONSIBILITY We use our resources responsibly and take initiative to improve

COMMUNICATION We make sure people know about our achievements and resources



Our values represent a shared set of beliefs to guide TRRA's course of action, both internally and with our members, partners, and supporters. Our values provide the foundation for our future, were used to develop our revised vision and mission, and will serve as the basis for decision-making and organizational focus.



Where We Are Headed

MISSION, VISION & BIG GOALS

Our selection of goals and associated activities is the result of the creation of a shared vision and revised mission rooted in our values.

OUR VISION

Our region's rivers are accessible for recreation, competition and a healthier life.

OUR MISSION

We develop and deliver safe, sustainable programs and events that teach and promote the benefits of rowing and paddling to our diverse community.

OUR BIG GOALS

- 1. Make what we do, and what we have, better**
- 2. Reach and engage more people**
- 3. Be a national leader**

STRATEGIES TO GUIDE OUR WORK

STEPPING UP

One of the biggest areas of feedback from interviewees and from members via our member survey was to improve where and how we work. We will adopt an organization-wide mode of improvement to formalize operations and procedures and enhance and improve facilities.

WORKING TOGETHER

We will use the roll-out of our strategic plan to begin working together more closely to achieve our goals while making best use of the talents and skills of our team. Action Teams will be formed across the organization within each of our focus areas that will include staff, board, members and volunteers focused on moving our plan forward.

We will leverage the skills of our team to create cross-organization action teams to accomplish our big goals, and to develop and implement action plans. TRRA staff and board have begun to select initial areas of interest and expertise. Staff and board will work to recruit additional Action Team members from board, membership and volunteers.

PLANNING THE WORK, WORKING THE PLAN

While our strategic plan provides a solid foundation for moving forward, we will create more detailed work plans for each of our focus areas to guide our activities. We will develop, communicate and implement clear action plans across all areas of the organization.

We will apply our vision and mission across all areas of the organization while working to achieve our big goals. We've used the strategies outlined to develop objectives for each of the following focus areas:

FACILITIES

Boathouses & Equipment

PROGRAMS

Teams, Events, Camps/Classes

TEAM

Staff, Board, Members, Coaches, Volunteers

COMMUNICATIONS

Brand, Materials, Technology

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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