

# **Green Valley Recreation**

## **Strategic Plan**

***2007 – 2012***

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**Planning and Evaluation Committee  
Strategic Plan Subcommittee**

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# Green Valley Recreation Strategic Plan

## 2007 - 2012

### Introduction

This Plan (the Green Valley Recreation Strategic Plan for 2007-2012) attempts to look at trends, changes, limitations and threats for the next five years and beyond and the opportunities and challenges that these present to Green Valley Recreation. Previous strategic plans have focused on the next three years, but with current facility construction projects taking three years from inception to completion, it was felt that a strategic plan needed to look well beyond that time frame.

While the Strategic Planning Subcommittee (referred to here as “the Committee”) has taken the GVR Mission Statement, “To provide recreational and social opportunities that enhance the quality of our members’ lives,” as our basic premise, the Committee believes that the term *leisure education* should be added to that mission statement. In fact, leisure education is already being provided in many areas. The Committee has also taken the position that the Mission applies to users and prospective users of GVR activities and facilities. Therefore, the Plan addresses providing, where cost effective, activities and facilities to attract member use rather than curtailing plans to reduce costs to members who do not choose to use GVR.

As a Needs Assessment Survey could not be funded in 2006, the committee held a number of meetings with members in selected areas of interest such as volunteers, clubs with facilities, new members, cards and games, social and non-users. Despite wide advertising and direct mail to potential attendees, attendance was seldom more than 5 at a meeting with the exception of the non-users meeting. This latter meeting had been misrepresented in an announcement by the Green Valley News and, rather than coming to find ways that GVR could be of use to current non-users, attendees came to demand complete removal from GVR or elimination of their dues. None of the member sessions developed any significant new ideas and could not be considered representative of the membership as a whole nor even of their specific group.

Below are the factors that the committee found that should affect GVR over the next several years.

### Trends

- **Growth** – GVR will continue to grow in membership with the increase of new homes within the areas where property is dedicated to GVR. An appendix shows the anticipated numbers.
- **Demographics** – While demographics may change significantly after several years, as the charts in the appendix indicate, it is most likely that there will be only a slight change in the age mix of the members. Increased resale numbers indicate that older members are now leaving and being replaced by younger members. Unless additional properties are committed

to GVR, the historical trend of 300 new homes coming into GVR per year should cease in about ten years. This Plan does not speculate with regard to potential boundary changes. New homes and resales of existing homes are expected to have (on average) younger occupants than the current average home. Current occupants will age, and ultimately leave the community for one reason or another. The cycle continues.

In addition, current studies indicate that “Boomers” (those born between 1945 and 1964), are in better health and more physically active than those of a few decades ago. Thus as members age, they can be expected to continue most of their activities into later years. Evidence of this can already be seen in the numbers of octogenarians in activities such as the tennis and hiking clubs.

Of greater impact will be the changing attitudes of those entering GVR either in new homes or through resales.

Studies are not consistent as to whether these Boomers will provide the level of volunteerism that GVR requires. GVR (and, in fact, Green Valley) run on the efforts of volunteers in a wide variety of capacities. A Harvard/Metlife study and others question the willingness of “Boomers” to volunteer. Green Valley organizations today report difficulty finding volunteers from the newest Green Valley residents.

On the other hand, the Bureau of Labor Statistics data shows that “Boomers” currently volunteer at a rate higher than any other generation. It will be the challenge of GVR to ensure that as “Boomers” retire that they continue to volunteer.

- **Facilities** – While some of our facilities are under construction or are relatively new, on average the centers are aging and will require increased maintenance and updating to current levels of standards.
- **Surrounding Communities** – Sahuarita and Tubac continue to grow at a more rapid pace than Green Valley. These communities will bring a younger population, including more children, into the area. Should the distance for accepting guests be reduced, the potential number of guests, and the age range, will broaden. This can affect the activities of the membership.
- **Technology** – As new technologies become available, membership activity may shift dramatically. Examples are the sudden growth of digital camera users and the popularity of Computer Club classes. Other traditional hobbies are becoming digitized, affecting club activities. Capabilities in GPS and interactive on-line activities will increase and both new and existing members will adopt these new activities. These changes affect all phases of life, and GVR is no different. GVR will need to adapt to the changes in our members’ lives in order to remain relevant.

## Threats

- **Escalating Energy Costs** – Energy costs are rising at a rate much faster than the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This is a major element of GVR expenses. As energy demand worldwide continues to increase, there is reason to believe that these costs will continue to increase at a rate greater than the CPI. Limitations placed by the membership on dues increases prevent covering these increasing costs.
- **Escalating Construction Costs** – Similarly, construction costs are increasing at a higher than anticipated rate. While the rate of increase may level off with current indications of a decline in construction nationwide, there is no anticipation that the costs will return to previous levels. Agreed upon Developer Funds and new member funds used to construct our two new centers are no longer adequate to fund buildings large enough to provide future activities at current levels. Thus, as new homes are built, unless additional sources of capital are generated, our entire membership will progressively suffer a declining per capita capacity.
- **Changing Activity Levels** – Further, if the new members of GVR will be more active than previous generations, then we will find facility usage increasing resulting in even greater overcrowding.
- **Changing Interests** – As new members arrive and existing member's age, their overall interests and capabilities could also alter significantly the impact on the facilities that GVR provides.
- **Land for growth** – Available GVR land for future facility growth is limited and new land is both limited and expensive.

## Potential Threats

There are a number of areas where potential changes could have serious impacts on GVR but are as yet unknown.

- **Economic Downturns** – An economic downturn will reduce new member fees, affecting budgets.
- **Incorporation** – Another attempt to incorporate Green Valley is currently under way. It is not known whether voters will approve it, the format that it might take or whether it would affect GVR.
- **Legal Actions** – There is a movement among some members to have GVR deed restrictions removed. Such action could result in legal fees and associated efforts to defend.

Should the plaintiffs prevail, removal of deed restrictions would result in a significant impact on the way GVR operates. Plans for budgeting with a volatile membership would be difficult.

- **Tort** – There is an exposure to lawsuits, frivolous or otherwise, that could have severe impact on the financial state of GVR and require greater attention to risk management programs inside GVR.
- **County, State and Federal Statutes/Regulations** – Governmental regulations and fees are continuously extended with respect to requirements for public places. Such changes can affect internal areas (e.g., rest rooms) or external areas (e.g., parking lots).
- **Environmental Impacts** – Water quality, air quality and other environmental changes require proactive action by GVR. Such impacts may be external, within our facilities, or both.
- **Vandalism and theft** - While there does not currently appear to be a severe problem with vandalism and theft of property in GVR. With increased nearby urbanization, however, there is a potential that both may increase.

## Unknowns

There are a number of areas where GVR does not have information or where information is inadequate to plan for future needs.

- **Members Needs** – While organized clubs enunciate their requirements, GVR does not know what individuals might choose to do if new activities were available. Even with current activities, there is little information as to the real impediments that may prevent members' participation. Voluntary surveys have been unsuccessful in generating meaningful numbers of responses. Individual statements, either by hearsay or directed to board members, are unreliable as evidence of general needs or desires.
- **Member Residency** – There is currently no data on the number of members who are full or part time residents.
- **Non-users**– While there is a vocal group of “non-users”, their numbers and reasons are an unknown.
- **Utilization** – While the numbers of visits to a facility are known, the number of individual members who use a facility, the number who repeat use of a facility and multiple activity users are not known. In short, there is no information as to the percentage of GVR members who use what facilities or what percentage of GVR members uses any facility.
- **Community Organization Interactions** – The many other organizations of Green Valley and Pima County are embarking on strategies of their own which may intersect with

GVR strategies. New programs like the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) may provide opportunities. New facilities such as a concert auditorium may provide both opportunities and competition.

- **Trends in Crime** – Increased urbanization of the area population, will potentially increase vandalism and theft.
- **New Resident Attitudes** – While “Boomer” potential behaviors have been studied extensively, it is not clear whether the studies will prove to be valid or whether new residents in Green Valley will reflect these attitudes. This will affect volunteerism and usage.
- **Special Recreation District** – New legislation may permit a Special Recreation District outside of an incorporated community with potential for GVR.

## Goals

The Committee identified three general goals for GVR in support of its mission statement:

- Provide the best possible recreation, social and leisure education opportunities for current and future members.
- Be responsive to members’ needs and desires.
- Protect GVR assets.

## Objectives

In support of the above stated goals, the Committee defines the following objectives with associated strategies that should be pursued over the next five years.

### I. Understand the Needs and Desires of the Members

- Determine the needs and desires, spoken and unspoken, of our members through continual interrogation. Requests for input do not provide sufficient information. Members must be drawn out to express wants, not simply asked to offer suggestions.
- Determine trends of activity levels of new members relative to existing members to anticipate facility usage trends.

### II. Provide Quality Recreational Opportunities

- As the length of time to implement projects lengthens to three years and beyond, committee and board members are less likely to be familiar with the full history of a project. A means needs to be found to provide full documentation of each project from the criteria

for its selection through planning and implementation with all changes and their reasons. This documentation should be available to all committees and the board whenever changes to a project are discussed.

- To simplify and improve efficiency of administration, expand member access to interactive registration for programs via internet and track member participation.
- To optimize use of facilities and to obtain the most optimum facility available, experiment with new programs in different venues within GVR and the community at large.
- To ensure that the programs offered are the ones most desired by the membership, actively seek out member interests in programs.
- Evaluate having GVR provide programs both internally and through outside contracts based on quality and cost.
- Explore opportunities and partnerships with other organizations to bring additional quality events to Green Valley.
- To provide for our frail and disabled members, experiment with program opportunities appropriate to them working with the local medical, educational and assistances organizations.
- To ensure quality entertainment performances, continuously upgrade GVR facilities. Especially monitor audiovisual equipment, to provide up-to-date quality support for all venues. Such facilities will also attract performers and prevent GVR from being unable to support certain performers.
- To ensure the availability for members, actively co-sponsor community events where the events are of interest to GVR members.
- Utilize creative strategies to keep staff fresh and energized such as by selecting and mentoring university interns to assist management, bringing the latest ideas and academic studies to GVR.
- Evaluate and encourage and make recommendations to GVR clubs to streamline current program offerings to eliminate or minimize duplication of programs and facilities.
- Study the needs and potentials for better service to the disabled membership including sight, hearing, immobility, frailty, etc. For frail and mildly disabled members, evaluate the potential for a physical rehabilitation type of class offered on a continuing regular basis.
- Ensure that public transportation is available and promote its use for members to and from GVR facilities.

### III. Provide and Maintain Quality Recreation Facilities

- Replacement reserve funds currently depend upon new member fees for funding. This funding is volatile, depending on the number of new members buying homes. Changes in the Green Valley housing market make this funding vulnerable to economic cycles. A full study of future funding of GVR needs must be done to determine whether our long term cash flow requirements will be met to fulfill replacement needs as well as operational expenses.
- Keep the *Long-Range Facilities Plan* current by including options to meet the changing needs of the members and update the priority list, facility histories and project costs for the next five years. This plan should be expanded to:
  - identify all existing facilities by site
  - analyze potential expansion locations including satellite centers
  - establish architectural standards for maximum security and effective card access as well as energy efficiency
  - analyze the impact on furnishings and equipment required to satisfy future trends.
- Construction costs have been increasing faster than planned income is received. A financing element should be explored to provide for financing additions and improvements at today's costs with repayment provided by anticipated income.
- While plans exist to attack the problem of numbers of facilities to meet the needs of the members, there must be a plan to address the needs for a larger single auditorium. The number of members that can be served in a single meeting or performance is limited to the 500 that can fit into the current West Center. This is not adequate for current membership and will create additional problems in the future. A corollary problem is parking for an enlarged auditorium. GVR should collaborate with Pima County, Pima Community College, Green Valley Performing Arts Foundation and others to ensure that the planned Performance Arts Center at PCC - Green Valley Campus is an appropriate venue and is available.
- Create a means of ensuring that the priorities of the Long-Range Facilities Plan are not subverted by a special interest group lobby.
- Utilize computer maintenance management software by integrating
  - maintenance work orders,
  - Reserve Study Information,
  - supply and equipment inventory purchase orders,

- maintenance service contracts,
  - corresponding budget line items,
  - current and historical costs
- Create an internal warehouse operation with strong inventory controls.
- Closely manage the planning and construction of capital renovation and capital addition projects by monitoring cost and budgets and by using knowledgeable consultants. Attempt to better understand Pima County Development Services fees and regulations. Continue to cultivate contacts with County Development Services personnel.
- Through disaster management and recovery planning, enhance our risk management program by providing in-house training to key staff in conjunction with GVR clubs, outside agencies and other community organizations to plan and oversee disaster preparedness exercises. The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) organization should assist with and review such plans for completeness and involvement with other agencies.
- As energy costs are a significant cost to GVR, develop an energy management program while continuing to provide pleasant environments to GVR temperature standards at the most cost effective means possible. Such a program will continue to review alternative energy opportunities to determine their economic viability for GVR.
- Evaluate the de-centralization of staff and board functions currently at Member Service Center (MSC). Relocating staff closer to work responsibilities will improve efficiency and reduce overcrowding at the MSC.

#### **IV. Make Communication within GVR More Effective**

- Re-implement Needs Assessment Surveys on rotating cycles to better understand the changing needs and desires of our membership. Such surveys provide the most reliable method of evaluating present and future levels of satisfaction and needs. By surveying on a regular basis, trends can be detected and acted upon.
- To gain information in the most efficient manner, GVR must be involved with any community wide surveys to incorporate questions of value to GVR and to benefit from the overall results. This will undoubtedly involve financial support, but is less expensive than mounting our own surveys.
- Continue to teach, encourage and emphasize the concept of "Superior Consumer Service" among the Board, Staff and volunteers.
- Improve and expand our methods for obtaining membership feed-back from all GVR activities: club, classes, administration, communication, finance, public relations, promotion

of GVR to the public, etc.

- More intensively promote awareness of all social, recreational and educational opportunities, to overcome any ignorance of GVR opportunities. This applies to all Staff, Board, and established, new, and anticipated future GVR members. Explore increased use of electronic distribution of information through subscription and/or broadcast as well as continually improving our website.
- Investigate a means to inform members who have been in GVR for a year but have not been to an orientation. GVR provides a thorough orientation program for new members but newcomers often do not attend due to the activities of getting settled into their home.
- Explore ways to increase Board communication with both staff and membership, both listening and disseminating.
- Establish a program which more accurately monitors our club system to ensure that GVR offers the best options and facilities to meet the current and future needs of our membership.
- To ensure a pleasant environment, establish and take proactive steps to more effectively communicate our Membership Code of Conduct and other facility policies.

## **V. Communicate Effectively Beyond GVR and Green Valley**

- GVR should provide effective marketing materials for use by community marketing agencies, such as real estate and Chamber of Commerce, to highlight the value of GVR membership and ensure appropriate expectations on the part of new member buyers.
- As GVR properties approach final build out, GVR can no longer rely on builder and developer advertising to market GVR. GVR should work with the Chamber of Commerce to produce marketing materials that can be distributed with materials responding to information requests from prospective residents, publications, and organizations.
- A continuing campaign should exist to promote the economic, recreational and community value of GVR membership at a price below that of any comparable capability anywhere.
- GVR should explore, with organizations such as the Green Valley Community Coordinating Council (GVCCC) and the Green Valley Sahuarita Chamber of Commerce, means such as conferences and conventions where Green Valley and GVR may be marketed.
- A position for a trained public relations and communications specialist should be created within the staff.

## **VI. Promote Strong Volunteer Participation**

- GVR should view volunteers from a global perspective. Develop strategies and new

volunteer opportunities to recruit from the entire membership, focusing on new approaches for the “Boomers.” Include all GVR Club volunteers into the program.

- Utilize, in a timely fashion, all individuals who have indicated a willingness to volunteer. Develop and employ a database of volunteers.
- Establish a program to recognize with a written response all offers to join the volunteer ranks.
- Increase resources for the Volunteer Program. Develop proactive communication with and training of volunteers. Expand the recognition programs for volunteers.
- Strive for 100% volunteer coverage at all activities, expanding volunteer and staff presence at GVR facilities in order to enhance service, promote safety and provide facility security.
- The administration should provide strong support and expand Center Operations Assistants to the volunteers at the centers.
- Incorporate the Community Volunteer Center and Leadership Academy as a means of finding, developing and encouraging volunteers within GVR.

## **VII. Proactively Manage Financial Resources**

- Continue to explore ways to optimize returns on reserve funds without increasing risk.
- Explore ways to forecast trends in costs of both operational expenses (e.g., utilities) and capital expenses (e.g., construction costs).
- To permit planning for a range of conditions, provide Planning and Financial committees with a range of potential costs for future expenses to allow for “worst case” scenarios.
- Continually review methods for financing including new sources and changes to existing sources that will enhance income without placing a burden on the membership.
- Continue to review and monitor internal controls to ensure accuracy and security.
- Recognizing the potential for increased vandalism and property theft at GVR facilities, physical asset protection must be continually monitored. Users should be encouraged to report instances of theft that would otherwise be unknown to the staff.
- GVR must continue to evaluate the insurance programs to ensure that GVR is adequately protected. Areas requiring continual insurance evaluation include:
  - Physical assets as our facilities grow, appreciate and change.
  - Legal protection against actions by users, members, employees, vendors, visitors, governmental bodies and action groups.

- The health and welfare of employees and volunteers.

### **VIII. Maintain Our Staff Performance at the Highest Quality Level**

- Continuously determine competitive salary, benefit, and working condition levels necessary to attract top quality recruits in our labor market.
- The knowledge and experience of GVR personnel represent a valuable asset. GVR must anticipate the loss of key personnel, and should ensure that job descriptions are formalized, complete and current. Continue cross training of personnel and identify ways to successfully capture the knowledge each has of the community, organization and profession.
- Expand efforts to hire qualified applicants with new and diverse experience as openings occur. This would include our University level Intern Program.
- Develop a system which will best recognize and reward, superior work performance.
- For employee satisfaction and improved productivity, encourage and explore expansion of employees' wellness programs.
- To ensure continued employee growth, create and maintain an ongoing training plan to respond to the needs of each staff member and provide adequate funding to meet these needs.
- Develop strategies to recruit and train younger tradespersons to work for GVR.
- Enhance the climate of our work environment, including work related dialogue between our employees.

### **IX. Enhance Synergy with Other Community Organizations**

- Increase GVR's involvement with community issues and events by participating in the Community Volunteer Center and Leadership Academy and providing leadership by participating in regularly meeting major Green Valley organizations to discuss tactical and strategic community issues.
- Consider making newcomer orientation a community wide function, separating the club creation (a GVR function) from the orientation. Involve the Chamber of Commerce and GVCCC.
- Encourage staff to participate in community organizations and committees.
- Publicly support community issues which benefit the members and maintain a dialogue with outside organizations that have impact on facilities and/or services. Work

in cooperative spirit to utilize other facilities within the community for activities.

- Provide improved communication to other organizations within the community as to facilities and services that may be obtained from GVR. These may be either of a contract or public service type.
- Participate with other community organizations in researching the potentials of creating a community wide parks and recreation district.
- Participate with other community organizations in the community debate regarding public open space and provide facilities for, if not host events for all residents within the Green Valley boundaries.
- Develop and maintain a continuous liaison between community groups' planning functions to avoid duplication of effort and to utilize opportunities that may arise for shared programs.
- Continue to explore opportunities with other community groups for the sharing of facilities.

## **X. Exploit Technologies**

- Explore opportunities with wireless internet both for internal functions and for member use.
- Continue to actively monitor opportunities for economic use of alternative energy sources
- Explore ways to provide continuous safety and security monitoring of all facilities such as video monitoring.
- Explore ways in which members may be advised in real time as to the availability of scarce resources. Examples might be:
  - On-line indicators as to the number of people in a fitness room or on-line video of the rooms to indicate their level of occupancy.
  - On-line reservation of facilities such as billiard tables
- Explore further implementation of electronic recording of information within the organization.
- Review computer systems to ensure that they interface with each other and with standard software to allow easy correlation and report generation across systems.
- Create a plan to replace or enhance non interfacing systems.

## **XI. Health & Safety**

- Establish a plan to expand emergency medical device training.
- Provide continuing training in first aid, CPR, etc. to add further protection for members.
- Provide safety/training to the monitors for all physically strenuous areas to protect members from injury.
- Provide simplified equipment usage references to reduce injuries from unsafe or misuse of equipment wherever GVR equipment is available for use.

# Population Distribution

