



SAMMAMISH ROWING ASSOCIATION STRATEGIC PLAN : 2017-2019



Inspiring A Passion For Rowing



Sammamish Rowing Association is a not-for-profit community rowing organization founded in 1996. SRA is located in the heart of Marymoor Park on Seattle’s Eastside, at the north end of Lake Sammamish. In partnership with King County Parks and the City of Redmond, SRA serves more than 800 people each year. It draws participants from all over the Eastside and from dozens of area schools, creating a close-knit sense of community in a vast and sprawling region. Through both competitive and non-competitive rowing programs, SRA forms kids into young adults and develops teen and adult athletes who take pride in sportsmanship, fitness, commitment, teamwork, and discipline. SRA inspires a passion for rowing and changes lives in the process.

From early in its history until just recently, SRA’s resources were largely consumed by the process of building a new boathouse to replace the aging boatshed in which the organization spent its formative

years. The Hod Fowler Boathouse was dedicated in the fall of 2016, capping a decade-long process of research, design, permitting, fundraising, and construction. With the completion of the boathouse behind it, SRA can now redirect its resources to plan and prepare for a future of growth and opportunity.

PROGRAMS

Juniors

- High school: experienced and novice competitive boys teams and girls teams
- Middle school: weekday boys team and girls team, weekend boys and girls team
- Summer camps for high school and middle school rowers
- Local, regional, and national regattas for competitive teams

Masters

- 5 a.m., mid-morning, evening, and sculling teams
- Learn to Row classes
- Private lessons
- Local, regional, and national regattas

Independent rowers

- Independent rowing including access to SRA-owned small boats
- Private boat and oar storage
- Private lessons
- Local, regional, and national regattas

Introductory Row for a Day classes

Gym-only memberships



FLEET

- 60+ rowing shells
- 200+ oars
- 10+ coaching launches
- 45+ rowing machines



While SRA's greater community is the Eastside and the towns which surround us, our immediate community is the hundreds of participants who come through our doors each year. Our community consists of non-competitive and competitive teen and adult rowers as well as rowing parents. From athlete performance and member satisfaction to coaching quality and program administration, SRA intends to achieve a level of excellence that will draw the attention of teams across the country seeking benchmarks and guidance for how best to run a community rowing organization.



SRA's mission is to be a national role model in community rowing through purposeful inclusion and excellence in action.



In support of our mission, SRA holds as its highest values:

- **Thoughtful Stewardship.** SRA honors its role as a community asset and is committed to serving as a public resource to the local community. SRA prizes sound fiscal management and takes seriously its responsibility to operate on a stable financial footing that will enable it to serve future generations. SRA also treasures its home waters on Lake Sammamish and its location in the heart of Marymoor Park and is committed to environmentally sustainable practices that protect the surrounding lands and waterways.
- **Personal Discovery.** SRA strives to help every member become his or her best self

through rowing. From first-time rowers to elite competitors, every participant is a welcome member of the SRA family, in an organization which strives to create community and camaraderie among its members.

- **Team Success.** SRA fosters a culture of personal growth, integrity, and perseverance, as well as accountability for each individual to oneself, the team, and the organization as a whole.
- **Safety.** The safety of each member is SRA's greatest charge. Staff, coaches, and rowers alike take responsibility for keeping one another safe at all times.





SRA faces the future with internal strengths that serve it effectively and distinguish it from other rowing organizations. SRA can capitalize on the things it does successfully and is well-positioned to take advantage of the many external opportunities that are available to it.

STRENGTHS

- SRA is the only rowing organization on the Eastside and enjoys an unusually large catchment area.
- Workforce stability is reflected in the fact that a number of coaches have been with SRA for more than 5 years.
- Coaches at all levels are respected and well-liked.
- Members feel a strong sense of family and value being part of a larger organization. They consider themselves to be members of the Sammamish team, not just individual rowers.
- A brand-new, state-of-the-art boathouse provides an appealing benefit for rowers and coaches alike.
- A wide variety of programs attract a diverse range of member types, drawing first-time, non-competitive, competitive, elite, and independent rowers.
- Expert care of equipment means that boats and oars are well-maintained and outlive their projected lifespans. In addition, a fleet-rotation program currently under development will ensure regularly scheduled replacement of and upgrades to aging equipment.

OPPORTUNITIES

- SRA can create an organization that attracts coaches who recognize this is a place where they can succeed.
- SRA can increase financial giving by its members and by outside organizations.
- Completion of the Hod Fowler Boathouse enables SRA to shift fundraising focus from construction to other needs such as equipment and scholarships.
- SRA can increase its national reputation in order to enhance its ability to attract and retain rowers, coaches, donors, and sponsors.
- Marketing for specific needs can enable SRA to better fill programs in a timely manner and more accurately project revenue.
- Creating a dedicated plan and purpose for SRA gym facilities, including a more optimal set up, can improve overall member experience.
- Creating a masters non-competitive and/or sculling league can provide additional opportunities for masters who prefer not to compete.
- Better availability and quality of small boats can improve the experience of independent members.
- SRA can create additional opportunities for members to volunteer in order to increase member-community connectedness and enhance stewardship of our resources.





Mapping out a future for SRA requires an objective look at weaknesses within the organization that may impact its ability to grow and thrive. Likewise, it is necessary to understand external threats which may have a similar effect.

WEAKNESSES

- The lack of a coaching pipeline leaves SRA vulnerable in the event of staff departures.
- A slow equipment cycle means that aging shells make up a disproportionate share of the fleet.
- Wear and tear on launches results in the need for extensive maintenance, directly impacting SRA's ability to put rowers on the water.
- Rising costs have resulted in increasing member fees.
- A small dock limits SRA's ability to expand team sizes or host regattas.
- Limited parking constrains SRA's ability to expand team sizes, host regattas, or make its facility available for rentals.
- SRA-wide communications are irregular, and delivery methods are inconsistent.
- Unreliable access to boats negatively impacts experience of independent rowers and has led to declining participation in independent rowing.
- Cyclical and seasonal variations in program size make revenue difficult to project and forces staff to scramble to fill empty seats.
- A low number of quality local and regional regattas limits the volume of racing opportunities for competitive rowers.

- SRA's ability to offer non-competitive opportunities for all program types is constrained by available resources (time, dock space, launches, and equipment).
- SRA has limited funding and space for additional administrative staff, and current staff bandwidth is close to maximum capacity.

THREATS

- Changing school hours in the various districts SRA serves make it difficult to schedule sufficient practice hours for SRA's competitive junior teams and impinge on the practice hours of other programs.
- Another rowing organization could open on the Eastside, siphoning members or potential members from SRA.
- Staff departures could result in a shortage of coaches and restrict SRA's ability to put rowers on the water.
- A decrease in the popularity of rowing could result in reduced demand for SRA's programs and services.
- Failure to meet the higher fixed expenses of the new boathouse could force SRA to operate at a deficit.
- The major injury or death of a member could result in litigation, financial losses, and damage to SRA's reputation.
- Limited ability to increase the number of scholarships and the absence of a dedicated scholarship fund restrict SRA's ability to serve all community members regardless of ability to pay.



SRA IN THE FUTURE : Goals



The following goals will help SRA achieve its mission and live up to its values.

GOAL 1

Maintain a financially sustainable organization.

GOAL 2

Provide programs that meet the needs of novice, non-competitive, and competitive members and foster a culture that treats each type of rower and program equally.

GOAL 3

Provide facilities and equipment that enhance the experience of all rowers.

GOAL 4

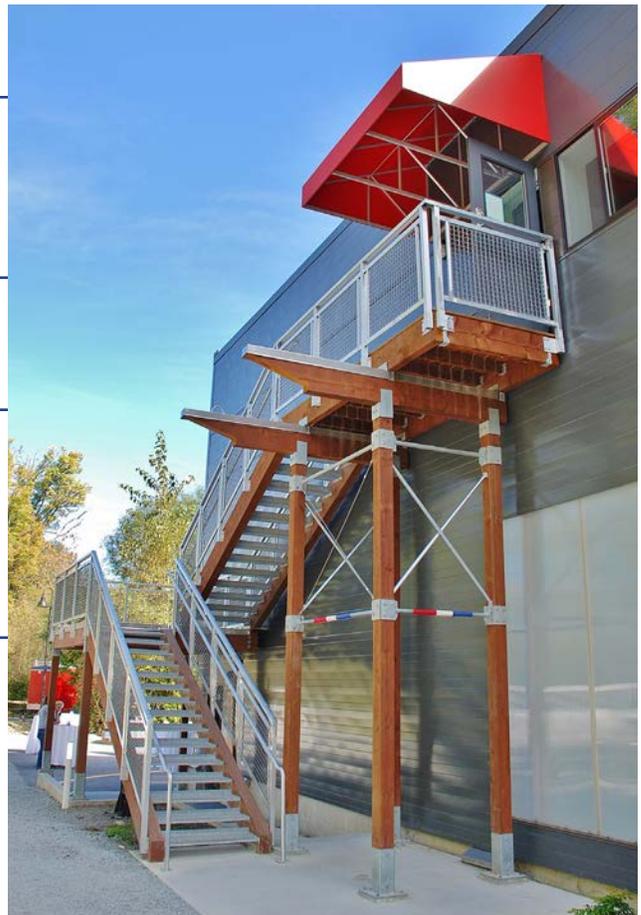
Provide quality staffing opportunities.

GOAL 5

Improve communication to ensure that members' voices are heard and that SRA's policies and plans are understood.

GOAL 6

Enhance SRA's standing as a good community steward through scholarships, environmental stewardship, and philanthropic development.



The tasks SRA will implement in order to deliver on its mission, values, and goals appear on the following pages.



Goal 1: Maintain a financially sustainable organization.

Ongoing Tasks

- Establish and adhere to an annual budget.
- Maintain adequate cash reserves and control expenses.
- Explore additional revenue streams made possible by completion of the boathouse.
- Maintain membership base necessary to achieve budget revenue projections and goals while still maintaining fair market value for our membership dues.
- Monitor membership numbers and trends in relation to budgeted numbers.
- Develop and grow volunteer opportunities to support SRA's needs.



New Initiatives

Year 1 - 2017

Perform more detailed annual review of expenses and establish annual audit process

- Responsible: Finance Committee and Executive Director
- Addresses: Rising costs (weakness)

Evaluate possible program and organizational changes to better manage costs and avoid cost increases

- Responsible: Staff, Finance Committee, Strategic Planning Committee
- Addresses: Rising costs (weakness)

Continue execution of plan to fund required undergrounding of utilities

- Responsible: Finance Committee
- Addresses: Boathouse/facilities (strength)

Develop plan to accelerate pay-down of boathouse loans; continue to ensure obligations are met

- Responsible: Finance Committee
- Addresses: Boathouse/facilities (strength), rising costs (weakness)

Perform profitability analysis of each program and sensitivity analysis of the size of each program

- Responsible: Staff and Finance Committee
- Addresses: Variations in program size (weakness)

Year 2 - 2018

Evaluate new sources of revenue to offset rising costs; prioritize options not constrained by resource availability

- Responsible: Strategic Planning Committee
- Addresses: Rising costs (weakness)

Evaluate potential uses for boathouse outside of current program times, such as facilities rentals, gym time, corporate events

- Responsible: Staff, Strategic Planning Committee
- Addresses: Facility (strength)

Create and distribute an annual report as part of marketing plan

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Marketing for specific needs (opportunity)

Develop and standardize marketing strategies around forecasted program sizes

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Marketing for specific needs (opportunity)

Year 3 - 2019

Implement plans for new sources of revenue as identified in Years 1 and 2

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Rising costs (weakness)



Goal 2: Provide programs that meet the needs of novice, non-competitive, and competitive members and foster a culture that treats each type of rower and program equally.

Ongoing Tasks

- For junior competitive team, train for every team member to win his or her event at Northwest Regionals and, for Nationals-qualified boats, to qualify for Grand Final at Nationals.
- For junior non-competitive teams, provide an environment to introduce juniors to the joy of rowing and team sports.
- For masters team rowers, schedule multiple timeslots to offer a full range of rowing programs, from introductory to nationally competitive.
- For independent rowers, make available a quality rowing experience for the full range of rowing levels, both non-competitive and competitive.
- Investigate alternative offerings to fill possible gaps in current programming, such as adult non-competitive and junior development team.

New Initiatives

Year 1 - 2017

Monitor new rowing organizations, especially those of similar size, type, and mission, to assess the competitive landscape

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Possibility of a competing organization (threat)

Ensure SRA delivers top quality compared to other local or highly competitive teams

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Possibility of a competing organization (threat)

Form a social committee to be chaired by one Board member, with the bulk of the work to be performed by targeted volunteers recruited to join the committee. The Board should provide a well-defined charter for the committee, since most of the work will be done by non-Board members.

- Responsible: Social Committee
- Addresses: Sense of family (strength)

Continue to evaluate junior-practice schedule adjustments caused by ongoing school-schedule changes in the region

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Changing school hours (threat)

Improve IRC communication, such as program schedules, events impacting boat availability, etc.

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: IRC experience (weakness)

Define the ideal size for each team program, including number of rowers and coaches

- Responsible: Staff and Strategic Planning Committee
- Addresses: Variations in program size (weakness)

Evaluate other program opportunities, such as masters non-competitive, corporate, etc.

- Responsible: Staff and Strategic Planning Committee
- Addresses: Team programs (weakness)

Goal 2 Continued...



SRA IN THE FUTURE : Goal 2 Cont.

Develop existing program opportunities, such as junior non-competitive, adaptive, etc.

- Responsible: Staff and Strategic Planning Committee
- Addresses: Team programs (strengths)

Year 2 - 2018

Evaluate other local and non-local racing opportunities

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: National recognition (opportunity), community involvement

Provide IRC members a method to participate in regattas by offering trailer space, race registration, etc.

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: IRC experience (weakness)

Discount IRC for members also in a team program, or vice versa

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: IRC experience (weakness)

Make monthly IRC membership a possibility

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: IRC experience (weakness)

Implement new program opportunities as identified in Year 1

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Team programs (weakness)

Evaluate winter-conditioning options such as off-water team program time

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Team programs (strengths – variety; opportunities – gym facilities)

Year 3 - 2019

Grow and maintain relationships with university programs

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: National recognition (opportunity)

Evaluate other national and international racing opportunities

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: National recognition (opportunity)

Evaluate busing options for juniors between boathouse and Marymoor Park

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Limited parking (weakness)

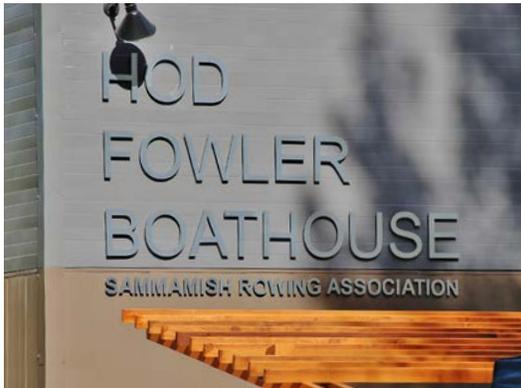


SRA IN THE FUTURE : Goal 3

Goal 3: Provide facilities and equipment that enhance the experience of all rowers.

Ongoing Tasks

- Annual recurring purchase of new erg machines.
- Launch cycling plan; engine cycling plan.
- Ongoing facility maintenance and upkeep.



New Initiatives

Year 1 - 2017

Create a long-term maintenance and replacement plan for major boathouse and property items

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Boathouse/facilities (strength)

Develop better layout and space usage in erg room to accommodate larger team sizes

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Gym improvement (opportunity)

Increase private boat storage

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: IRC experience (weakness)

Improve cycling plans for launch engines

- Responsible: Equipment Committee
- Addresses: Availability of working launches (weakness)

Create a launch emergency repair plan

- Responsible: Equipment Committee
- Addresses: Availability of working launches (weakness)

Evaluate at least three external launch maintenance plans

- Responsible: Equipment Committee
- Addresses: Availability of working launches (weakness)

Develop equipment cycling plan, including roll-down priorities and more detailed budget forecasts

- Responsible: Equipment Committee
- Addresses: Slow equipment cycle (weakness)

Measure the availability of beginner and intermediate boats to improve IRC experience

- Responsible: Equipment Committee
- Addresses: Slow equipment cycle (weakness)

Year 2 - 2018

Better understand feasibility of dock expansion within constraints of King County's ownership and county and state regulations

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Dock space/availability (weakness)

Improve management of dock space with current dock size

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Dock space/availability (weakness)

Implement equipment cycling plans with budget forecasts

- Responsible: Equipment Committee
- Addresses: Slow equipment cycle (weakness)

Create an equipment maintenance and cycling plan for non-erg equipment in the gym, such as bikes and weights

- Responsible: Equipment Committee
- Addresses: Slow equipment cycle (weakness)



Goal 4: Provide quality staffing opportunities.

Ongoing Tasks

- Continue to pay competitive wages and provide other financial benefits such as 401k matching, insurance, etc.
- Offer coaching education opportunities, from new hire through continuing education, and identify targeted development opportunities.
- Provide regular CPR training, complimentary for staff and members.
- Provide work-life balance and flexibility in scheduling employees.
- Ensure job descriptions and performance reviews continue to evolve with SRA's needs and strategic direction.
- Perform a staff satisfaction survey annually, at a minimum, and provide results and analysis to the Board President, Staff Liaison, and staff.



New Initiatives

Year 1 - 2017

Network within the coaching community to develop relations and ensure an easier, faster pipeline when necessary

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Lack of coaching pipeline (weakness)

Ensure and maintain staff morale

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Loss of coaches (threat)

Year 2 - 2018

Maintain connections with alumni and create an alumni database to build coach pipeline and maintain the SRA community

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Lack of coaching pipeline (weakness)

Develop pipeline of more experienced coaches

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Lack of coaching pipeline (weakness)

Implement career development planning for coaches and staff

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Creating a place where coaches want to come to succeed (opportunity)

Develop job descriptions and full-time job opportunities

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Creating a place where coaches want to come to succeed (opportunity)

Evaluate compensation and benefits for coaches and staff

- Responsible: Staff, Finance Committee
- Addresses: Creating a place where coaches want to come to succeed (opportunity)

Year 3 - 2019

Increase size of administrative staff

- Responsible: Staff, Finance Committee
- Addresses: Size/bandwidth of office staff (weakness)





Goal 5: Improve communication to ensure that members' voices and concerns are heard and that SRA's policies and plans are understood.

Ongoing Tasks

- Update the website regularly.
- Publish the email newsletter to members on a regular, consistent schedule.
- Communicate SRA's day-to-day operations and successes, such as regatta plans, program details, volunteer opportunities, etc.
- Assess member satisfaction regularly, at least once a year, and provide results and analysis to board, staff, and membership.

Goal 6: Enhance SRA's standing as a good community steward through scholarships, environmental stewardship and philanthropic development.

Ongoing Tasks

- Provide financial assistance to ensure that anyone who wants to can row. (This is currently on a case-by-case basis, and there is no dedicated funding source for either program or regatta fees.)
- Continue to assist King County in wetlands maintenance.
- Provide SRA-wide community volunteer opportunities: boathouse cleanup, Row for a Days, etc.

New Initiatives

Year 1 - 2017

Publicize success of SRA junior alumni: "Where are they now?"

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Communications (weakness)

Leverage local PR opportunities to promote SRA: "Tell our stories"

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Communications (weakness)

Year 2 - 2018

Create and distribute an annual report as part of a marketing plan

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Communications (weakness)

Develop and standardize marketing strategies around forecasted program sizes

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Communications (weakness)

New Initiatives

Year 1 - 2017

Create a comprehensive development plan with delivery strategies. Include specific plans for specific needs, such as strategies for scholarship fundraising and for equipment fundraising, etc., and include goals for both expenditures and fundraising.

- Responsible: Development Committee
- Addresses: Increased philanthropy (opportunity)

Develop SRA-wide volunteer activities, such as Marymoor projects, boathouse cleanups, etc.

Encourage development of more grassroots volunteer opportunities from within SRA.

- Responsible: Social Committee
- Addresses: Sense of family (strength)

Year 2 - 2018

Create a "green team" volunteer team to organize environmental stewardship; create a comprehensive plan for reducing SRA's footprint.

- Responsible: Staff
- Addresses: Environmental stewardship (opportunity)



SRA : The Road To Tomorrow



Usually a rowing organization starts with some rowers and a coach, then some boats and oars, and eventually a boathouse. But with SRA, the boathouse came first. In 1994, Hod Fowler, a former collegiate rower, learned of an old boathouse in Marymoor Park. The boathouse was originally built by the Overlake School on the site of a former sewage-treatment plant. Overlake later abandoned the building, and Fowler discovered it was weeks away from being demolished as part of a toxic-site cleanup project in Marymoor Park.

Fowler quickly recruited a community of interested rowers. With support from King County, Fowler and a small number of co-founders established a non-profit dedicated to serving the broadest range of users. They incorporated in 1995 and settled on the name Sammamish Rowing Association, choosing “association” over “club” to reflect the inclusive, public nature of the organization.

While the Marymoor site underwent rehabilitation, the new rowing organization spent its first two years in a temporary one-bay boathouse in Idylwood Park. During that time, SRA grew to include some 40 rowers, spread across a 5 a.m. team, a mid-morning team, and a junior program.

After two years in Idylwood and following the completion of the Marymoor cleanup, SRA moved into the old Overlake boathouse in 1997. Volunteers replaced the rotted roof on the boathouse, and the 5 a.m. team started the generator each morning until a volunteer work party eventually ran power and water from the street. Nonetheless, nothing could change the damp, dark, and rickety nature of the building.

Fowler and the board knew SRA was one major storm away from losing its boathouse. SRA was continuing to grow, with steadily expanding juniors’ and masters’ programs. A new home would soon be necessary, and conversations about building a new boathouse began almost immediately.



Continued...



SRA : The Road To Tomorrow Cont.



Given the challenges of building in a wetland, SRA considered alternative locations such as Idylwood Park and Lake Sammamish State Park, but after a five-year search settled on the Marymoor site as the best option. SRA received a shoreline permit in 2005, allowing for construction in the vicinity of the Lake Sammamish shoreline, but that was not the end of the story.

It took years of setbacks, disappointments, and persistence until SRA was finally awarded a building permit and was allowed to begin construction in 2010. Over the next six years, SRA built the new boathouse in phases, as funding permitted. The organization began using the boat bays in 2013, the gym in 2015, and the offices, bathrooms, and locker rooms in 2016.

Throughout the entire process, King County Parks' Community Partnership Grants program provided extraordinary moral and financial support. SRA's own members were the major source of capital over the years, and the taxpayers of Washington State funded a sizable grant that made the last phase of construction possible.

Today, with the new boathouse complete, more than 800 people come through the doors of Sammamish Rowing Association each year to experience Row for a Day events, Learn to Row classes, summer camps, independent rowing, competitive and non-competitive rowing teams for teens and adults.

Remaining true to Hod Fowler's original vision of a community organization open to all, SRA continues to provide rowing opportunities on a non-exclusive, first-come-first-served basis. Some 20 years after its founding and as it plans for a future filled with potential, SRA continues to change lives forever by inspiring a passion for rowing.



"Stay gritty, Sammamish."

Hans Struzyna - SRA alumnus, U.S. Olympic Team Rower

One boathouse. Many donors. Countless thanks.

