Strategic Plan – 2013-15

Approved September 15, 2012

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Introduction

In March of 2011, the US Lacrosse Board of Directors empowered its Strategic Planning Committee to initiate the development of a new strategic plan for the organization. The goal of this Board committee was to develop strategic priorities required to responsibly and effectively guide the organization's operations over the next three years. To best position the committee for success, consultant GeMar Neloms of Silver Spring, Maryland, was engaged to facilitate the plan development process. The ten-member Strategic Planning Committee spent more than 80 hours in four facilitated weekend retreats over the course of nine months:

- June 3-5, 2011
- September 23-25, 2011
- October 21-23, 2011
- February 3-5, 2012.

The committee included a wide range of expertise, intergenerational and historical perspective, and geographic and constituent diversity, and consisted of the following members:

Jim Landon, Chair (Boca Raton, FL)
Kendra Ausby (Baltimore, MD)
Craig Brown (Longmeadow, MA)
Christian Cook (Arlington, VA)
Jim Herrera (Avon, CT)
Janet Holdsworth (Minneapolis, MN)
Rich Morgan (Centennial, CO)
Ken Seal (Baltimore, MD)
Steve Stenersen (Staff Liaison)
Michele Uhlfelder (Los Angeles, CA)

The committee process provided an exhaustive review of relevant US Lacrosse documents, consideration of market and member surveys, significant discussion of organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, an analysis of US Lacrosse market segments, and detailed presentations and perspective from senior staff members representing all aspects of current operations. The committee culture emphasized full participation and open dialogue, with all committee members contributing equally to open and honest discussion leading to the priorities and goals enumerated in this document. When voting was required over consensus to move the committee beyond specific points of controversy during deliberations, the group adopted a 75% approval threshold to make decisions.

At the conclusion of the facilitated sessions, each member of the Strategic Planning Committee expressed his/her formal support of the plan's proposed content, intent and direction.

Organizational Profile & History

US Lacrosse began operations in January of 1998 after eight national lacrosse organizations merged to form the sport's first unified National Governing Body. The primary goal of the resulting 501(c)3 nonprofit organization was to establish the unified national structure necessary to provide the ongoing strategic leadership and resources required to fuel the responsible growth of men's and women's lacrosse.

US Lacrosse adopted its first Strategic Plan in September of 2002. The five-year plan included 27 goals within 10 areas of strategic priority. In June of 2007, the US Lacrosse Board of Directors adopted its second strategic plan, which included 17 goals within 8 areas of strategic concentration. Progress toward the goal within each plan was monitored and reported annually to the Board each January, with plan implementation deemed successful in each case.

The 2007 strategic plan reviewed and clarified the organization's mission, vision and value statements, which remain as follows:

- **Mission:** US Lacrosse is the National Governing Body of lacrosse. Through responsive and effective leadership, US Lacrosse provides programs and services to inspire participation while protecting the integrity of the sport.

- **Vision:** US Lacrosse envisions a future that offers people everywhere the opportunity to discover, learn, participate in, enjoy and ultimately embrace the shared passion of the lacrosse experience.

- **Values:** In accomplishing the mission of US Lacrosse, US Lacrosse values:

    - The customer
    - Opportunity for all
    - Clear and effective communication
    - High standards of conduct

The 2007 Strategic Plan also recommended the formation of an Organizational Effectiveness Committee (OEC) to thoroughly review organizational performance and make recommendations on operational and structural changes that would enable US Lacrosse to better serve its members, constituents and the sport. These recommendations were approved in September of 2009 and have since been implemented.

Changes in the organization's volunteer structure enacted as a result of the OEC recommendations in 2009 included the formation of a standing Strategic Planning Committee, which is now one of nine US Lacrosse Board committees. Prior to this change, a strategic planning committee was convened only to develop and present a strategic plan and then dissolved. The Board of Directors then monitored the organization's ongoing progress toward each plan goal. This is therefore, the first strategic plan that will benefit from ongoing oversight and evaluation by a standing Strategic Planning Committee that reports directly to the Board of Directors.

US Lacrosse operations have evolved significantly since inception. Membership has grown from 20,000 in 1998 to over 400,000 today; staff has expanded from a dozen to just over 70; and, the organization's annual operating budget has increased from $1.2 million to over $17 million. Over the last decade, lacrosse has become one of the fastest-growing sports in the country, and demand for US Lacrosse resources, leadership and influence continues to climb.

This strategic plan has been developed within the context of the growth of the sport of lacrosse and the growth of US Lacrosse over the past 14 years. US Lacrosse has matured significantly as an organization since it began operations in 1998. The strategic priorities that are set forth in this strategic plan are intended to direct the actions taken by US Lacrosse over the next 3 years in a manner that takes into account the maturity of the organization and attempts to drive further growth and maturity within the context of the mission, vision and values of the organization through the establishment of 5 interdependent strategic priorities.

Strategic Planning Committee Assumptions

Throughout its process, the Strategic Planning Committee identified a number of ideas and concepts that evolved to be organizational "assumptions" determined to be fundamental to strategic plan success and resulting organizational development. These assumptions are as follows:

- **Create and leverage impact data**
    - Consistently collecting and analyzing data on all primary areas of organizational performance is required to evaluate and adjust, if necessary, methods and strategies.
    - Regular and effective communication of organizational impact to current and prospective members and donors is essential to earning their continued support.
- **Maximize the efficiencies and power of technology**
    - In order to effectively scale growing operations, given the anticipated and ongoing resource limitations required to serve such a broad geographic footprint, US Lacrosse must invest in technologies that will expand organizational reach, relevance and influence.
- **Maximize funding for strategic priorities**
    - The levels of organizational success achieved as a result of this strategic plan will depend largely on the budget discipline required to adequately fund its priorities and goals over the next three years.

The Strategic Planning Committee believes that it is critically important to the success of this strategic plan that US Lacrosse embraces and operates consistently and continuously with these assumptions as guiding principles of organizational action. The strategic priorities that have been identified by the Strategic Planning Committee are dependent upon the integration of these assumptions into the culture of US Lacrosse.

Summary of Recommended Strategic Priorities

After thorough discussion, the Strategic Planning Committee was unanimous in its belief that the current mission and vision statements and the enumerated US Lacrosse values were appropriate and did not require revision.

The Committee also identified the following five overarching strategic priorities for US Lacrosse over the next three years, the rationale and goals of which are explained in greater detail in the next section:

- **Enhance the quality of the lacrosse experience for participants**
- **Strengthen access and opportunity for all**
- **Strengthen/modify the organization's structure/infrastructure to enhance its capacity to lead and serve**
- **Strengthen and ensure the organization's long-term financial viability**
- **Elevate the visibility of the organization and the sport**

The Strategic Planning Committee believes that current operations have outpaced the vision of the current 5 year strategic plan which will expire in December 2012. Accordingly, the Committee has concluded that the organization's next strategic plan should cover a 3 year period in order to better position the priorities of the plan to remain aligned with constantly evolving operational realities, and to allow for a more nimble organization that can respond effectively to the challenges and opportunities created by rapid sport growth.

Although these strategic priorities are presented in a particular order, the Strategic Planning Committee firmly believes that these 5 strategic priorities are interdependent. As the National Governing Body of lacrosse US Lacrosse owes a duty to its existing members, future members, and the sport of lacrosse generally. Consistent with its mission and vision, US Lacrosse strives at all times to enhance each member's experience and to deliver programs and services that provide the highest quality lacrosse experience possible. Organizational infrastructure designed to position US Lacrosse as the leading voice in the sport of lacrosse and the source of programs, services and best practices designed to drive responsible growth of lacrosse is integral to the accomplishment of the mission and vision of the organization, and financial viability is the underpinning for that infrastructure. In order to be most effective in pursuing its mission and vision, US Lacrosse must be recognized and respected as the leader within the national lacrosse community and as a prominent leader within the international lacrosse community.

AREAS OF STRATEGIC PRIORITY AND ASSOCIATED GOALS

Strategic Priority: Enhance the Quality of the Lacrosse Experience for Participants

Overview: From its inception, US Lacrosse has been committed to inspiring participation and creating the safest, most positive playing experience for youth. This strategic priority is embedded in the mission of US Lacrosse: "…providing programs and services to inspire participation while protecting the integrity of the sport." The priority is to cultivate a quality lacrosse experience by promoting safety, sportsmanship and skill development throughout the lacrosse experience. The lacrosse experience includes games, practices, training, and off-field associations with lacrosse.

US Lacrosse fosters responsible growth of the game by providing essential education and training resources to "consumers of the game:" players, parents, coaches, officials and spectators. US Lacrosse wants to educate its consumers to understand and responsibly strive to fulfill their respective roles in the quality lacrosse experience. US Lacrosse wants to provide essential educational resources, tools and information for each consumer to be able to access a quality lacrosse experience.

Safety is a paramount concern; therefore, US Lacrosse will continue to stay at the forefront of developments in sports science and safety. These developments will be incorporated into the resources made available to US Lacrosse consumers.

- **Goal: Promote and preserve game integrity and player safety.**

  Suggested Strategies:

  - Provide training and education for coaches in player development, team development, skills and rules of the game.
  - Provide training and education for officials in execution of game rules.
  - Establish a national structure, consistent qualifications and associated accountability for assignors.
  - Conduct a needs assessment of coaches by region. Conduct a needs assessment of officials by region. Incorporate the results into the resources we provide to players, coaches and officials.

Rationale and intent: The promotion and preservation of game integrity and player safety is essential to a quality lacrosse experience and the perception that lacrosse offers the opportunity for a quality experience. Coaches and officials are critically important in achieving that goal. The continued devotion of substantial resources to training and education for coaches and officials must continue to be a priority for US Lacrosse. In addition, lacrosse is a legacy sport with a deep history and strong traditions that define game integrity. It is incumbent upon US Lacrosse to safeguard game integrity through strategies that are designed to insure to the maximum extent possible that the experience on the field conforms to the ideals of the sport of lacrosse.

Primary Staff Liaison: Managing Director, Sport Development

- **Goal: Promote a positive sports culture and climate.**

  Suggested Strategies:

  - Create a culture curriculum for players, coaches, officials and parents.
  - Establish an age verification system for U-15 play.
  - Provide players, parents and officials with resources that assist them in understanding their respective roles in providing a quality lacrosse experience and encourage them to responsibly strive to fulfill those roles.

Rationale and intent: While coaches and officials are clearly an important part of a quality lacrosse experience, the Strategic Planning Committee believes strongly that US Lacrosse must be the leader in the overall promotion of a positive lacrosse culture and climate as part of providing players, coaches, officials and parents with a quality lacrosse experience. As more and more individuals first become acquainted with the sport of lacrosse, it is critically important that their introduction to the sport include an understanding of and opportunity to participate in a positive way in a lacrosse culture and climate that reflects positively on the sport of lacrosse at all times.

Primary Staff Liaison: Managing Director, Sport Development

- **Goal: Empower and mobilize parents to promote US Lacrosse standards.**

  Suggested Strategies:

  - Develop a toolkit for parents to make them better educated consumers of their child's lacrosse experience.
  - Form a task force of college coaches, business owners and parents to research, investigate and explore positive and negative components of youth lacrosse as well as potential solutions to identified negative components. Where appropriate, incorporate those findings into resources US Lacrosse provides to players, coaches and officials.
  - Host town hall meetings to promote and provide a forum for public discussion of the positive and negative components of youth lacrosse as well as potential solutions to identified negative components.

Rationale and intent: Parents should be an integral part of the overall effort to provide the highest quality lacrosse experience for all participants. Many parents are newly exposed to lacrosse, therefore US Lacrosse must establish and activate a meaningful delivery system for the full range of information that parents require in order to make informed decisions regarding the participation of their children in the sport of lacrosse. As the National Governing Body for lacrosse, US Lacrosse is perfectly positioned to take the leadership role in this important educational endeavor.

Primary Staff Liaison: Managing Director, Sport Development

- **Goal: Utilize Sports Science & Safety Committee as a key resource for improving safety and enjoyment of the game for players and fans.**

  Suggested Strategies:

  - Provide guidelines for safe play environment.
  - Incorporate findings and recommendations of the SS&S Committee into rules.
  - Promote use of unified safety rules to avoid regional inconsistencies and enhance the quality of experience.
  - Develop and implement strategies to better engage industry manufacturers and retailers to improve safety.

Rationale and intent: The Sports Science & Safety Committee of US Lacrosse is a critically important asset of the organization that serves significantly to identify US Lacrosse as the National Governing Body for lacrosse and the leader of the sport. This Committee has been responsible for the development, completion and dissemination of significant studies relating to safety issues in the sport of lacrosse that have contributed to a safer lacrosse environment through the application of scientific research that has also been beneficial to other sports. The Sports Science & Safety Committee must be provided with the resources necessary to continue to be proactive in identifying and addressing issues relating to safe play, and the information developed by the Sports Science & Safety Committee must be disseminated and utilized to improve the quality of the lacrosse experience and the perception of the quality of the lacrosse experience.

Primary Staff Liaison: Managing Director, Games Administration

Strategic Priority: Strengthen access and opportunity for all.

Overview: According to US Lacrosse membership data, approximately 90 percent of people who play, coach, officiate or administer lacrosse are white. Racial/Ethnic disparity continues at the collegiate level with the NCAA reporting that approximately ten percent (10%) of NCAA student-athletes playing lacrosse are people of color. With increased equipment costs, continued escalating costs of clinics, camps, and traveling club programs, and the nature of earlier collegiate recruiting efforts, access and opportunity challenges exist *within* the sport. Current US Lacrosse grant-programs provide resources to help promote exposure of the sport to underrepresented and underserved youth of various racial, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. US Lacrosse, as the national leader of the sport, must strengthen these programs and develop new efforts to increase access to the sport and decrease opportunity disparity within the sport for all. In addition, US Lacrosse must strive to eliminate the perception that there are limited opportunities to participate in the sport and instead promote the concept of participation by all in the sport of lacrosse.

- **Goal: Develop, prioritize and establish strategies to increase participation for underrepresented and underserved individuals.**

  Suggested Strategies:

  - Develop a strategy for finding and enabling community leaders and underserved/underrepresented groups to initiate youth lacrosse programs.
  - Develop strategies to support modified games that can allow access and participation in lacrosse other than the traditional field game.

Rationale and intent: Integral to the mission and vision of US Lacrosse is fostering increased participation in the sport. Underrepresentated groups can be identified statistically through an examination of racial, ethnic and socioeconomic factors that affect particular populations and serve as barriers or potential barriers to participation in the sport of lacrosse. Underserved individuals exist within populations that lack the resources necessary to participate in lacrosse or the playing opportunities required in order to develop lacrosse skills. US Lacrosse must identify both underrepresented and underserved groups and individuals as candidates for participation in the sport of lacrosse, and US Lacrosse must also devote significant resources to the development and implementation of targeted strategies that are designed to reach these individuals and provide them with the opportunity to participate in the sport of lacrosse.

Primary Staff Liaison: Managing Director, Sport Development

- **Goal: Develop cost effective solutions for entry into the game.**

  Suggested Strategies:

  - Establish an effective industry council to help develop cost effective solutions.
  - Utilizing input from the industry council, develop and implement strategies to better engage the lacrosse manufacturing and retailing industries in relation to affordability.

Rationale and intent: The cost of entry into the sport of lacrosse is a significant barrier for many potential participants. The interests of US Lacrosse in fostering participation and the manufacturing and retail communities should be aligned in relation to the development and implementation of strategies that decrease costs as a barrier to participation, since increased participation will clearly benefit the manufacturing and retailing industries.

Primary Staff Liaison: Managing Director, Sport Development

- **Goals: Establish and implement a strategy to address capacity at all levels of lacrosse for access to and affordability of fields and facilities.**

  Suggested Strategy:

  - Develop resources to assist local teams/league organizers in acquiring fields, officials and coaches.

Rationale and intent: The practical barriers to participation in the sport of lacrosse often seem insurmountable to those interested in becoming involved in the sport. US Lacrosse must develop and disseminate resources that can provide meaningful assistance to enable these barriers to be overcome by prospective participants in the sport of lacrosse, particularly individuals or organizations that desire to establish a local team or league.

Primary Staff Liaison: Managing Director, Sport Development

Strategic Priority: Strengthen/modify US Lacrosse's structure/infrastructure to enhance the capacity to lead and serve.

Overview: The need to strengthen both the structure and infrastructure of US Lacrosse was addressed in both prior strategic plans of US Lacrosse. In the planning stages of the 2007 plan the committee members considered the elimination of the chapter structure, but in the final report it was recommended that the organization implement new organizational volunteer and staff structures based on the Strategic Planning recommendations approved by the Board of Directors.

As result of that goal, an Organizational Effectiveness Committee ("OEC") was established. One of the five fundamental components of that committee's Board approved recommendations was the strengthening of the Chapter network. Specifically, the OEC recommended that the Chapter network be significantly strengthened and far better resourced in order to enable US Lacrosse to effectively serve and support regional lacrosse development.

To achieve those objectives the Board of Directors constituted a Regional Chapters Committee and charged it with recommending changes to the existing chapter structure. The Chapter Effectiveness Subcommittee ("CES") of the Regional Chapters Committee was formed to accomplish this objective.

The development of the 2012 Strategic Plan and the evolution of the Chapter Effectiveness Sub-Committee's report were on parallel paths and there was committee representation from the Strategic Planning Committee on the Chapter Effectiveness Subcommittee. The Strategic Planning Committee fully supports the results of the CES and considers the goals and objectives of that report to be consistent with those articulated in this section of the 2012 Strategic Plan.

- **Goal: Develop and implement a regional structure.**

Rationale and Intent: US Lacrosse has worked diligently over the years to deliver its programs and services from its location in Baltimore, Maryland. As the sport of lacrosse continues to grow in a rapid and dramatic fashion, however, it has become evident that US Lacrosse must develop an effective, more decentralized regional structure.

In order to support local lacrosse constituencies through the delivery of programs and services, US Lacrosse must have a significant regional presence. It should be accomplished in steps, as funding permits, with the ultimate objective of having staff responsible for regions with those staff ultimately located in strategic regions around the country.

Primary Staff Liaison: Managing Director, Membership; Director of Regional Development

- **Goal: Strengthen chapters**

Rationale and Intent: Chapters have been a part of US Lacrosse since its inception. Historically, US Lacrosse has viewed chapters as part of the delivery system of US Lacrosse's mission and vision. It is the recommendation of the committee, however, that chapters also become a primary contact point with their local constituencies, encourage those constituencies to embrace US Lacrosse's best practices, and deliver US Lacrosse's programs and services to those constituencies.

To accomplish this goal it is the recommendation of the committee that the chapter's role in support of US Lacrosse be defined and clarified, the accountability system for chapters be strengthened, that a leadership training and education track be developed and implemented at the national convention, that the chapters' role in the delivery of information and services be clarified, defined, and implemented, and that a method of reallocation of financial support be developed and implemented to more effectively fund the delivery of US Lacrosse's programs and services consistent with its stated mission.

Primary Staff Liaison: Managing Director, Membership; Director of Regional Development

- **Goal: Maximize volunteer/staff synergy**

Rationale and Intent: There are two extremely important elements of the US Lacrosse organization that have significantly contributed to its growth - its staff and its volunteers. Moving forward it is critical to the continued evolution of US Lacrosse and its role as the National Governing Body of Lacrosse that these two groups work together synergistically.

Criteria must be established to maximize the effectiveness of volunteer-based committees and those committee members' working relationship with staff, guidelines must be developed and implemented to assess the engagement of volunteers on committees and provide for a method of termination should a committee member not be contributing to the activities of a committee of which that person is a member, and to support the continued excellence of volunteers and ensure the organization has a deep pool of high quality, well qualified, volunteers.

Primary Staff Liaison: CEO

- **Goal: Develop and implement strategies that promote collaborative efforts among US Lacrosse, its chapters and youth leagues to advocate, deliver and utilize US Lacrosse's programs and services**

Rationale and Intent: While US Lacrosse is the National Governing Body of men's and women's lacrosse and serves all lacrosse constituencies, it primarily serves the youth game.

With the youth game being the focus of US Lacrosse's efforts, coupled with the recommendations to strengthen chapters which, utilizing a regionalized system, become the focal point for delivery of US Lacrosse's programs and services, it is critical that chapters collaborate with youth leagues to enhance the lacrosse experience in their respective areas. To accomplish this, chapters must embrace their local constituencies to ensure that needed programs and services are provided in their area.

If US Lacrosse is to strengthen its position as the National Governing Body of lacrosse, it is incumbent upon the organization to collaborate with its constituencies, including youth leagues, to be in conformance with the requirements of the Amateur Sports Act, which requires that the National Governing Body "develop interest and participation throughout the United States and be responsible to the persons and amateur sports organizations it represents".

Primary Staff Liaisons: Managing Director, Membership; Director of Regional Development

- **Goal: Resolve the issue of a new national headquarters in a manner consistent with the strategic priorities of the organization.**

Rationale and intent. The Board of Directors has determined to pursue the identification and establishment of a new national headquarters that provides for all staff to work together in a single facility based upon cost efficiencies and long term growth potential. US Lacrosse must establish a national headquarters facility that serves as an effective administrative office that enables staff to interact, collaborate and develop and provide for the delivery of high quality, innovative programs and services consistent with the mission and vision of the organization, while balancing the need to preserve fund raising capacity that could be utilized for the delivery of programs and services.

Primary Staff Liaison: CEO

Strategic Priority: Strengthen and ensure long-term financial viability

Overview: While US Lacrosse has been the beneficiary of a very strong growth trend, US Lacrosse is not without financial challenges. The pressure is on US Lacrosse constantly to create and deliver the best possible value proposition to members and prospective members. Price sensitivity makes US Lacrosse reluctant to raise its membership fee. US Lacrosse is keenly aware of the fact that there are a significant number of members who value only the US Lacrosse insurance program. US Lacrosse must raise awareness and understanding of its full range of benefits. In order to increase its member share of total participation, it is incumbent upon US Lacrosse to grow not only as the sport grows but also to reach significant numbers of current non-members.

It is also clear that additional financial resources are required in order to enable US Lacrosse to expand programs and services and develop and engage in new initiatives. US Lacrosse must therefore increase charitable contributions to US Lacrosse utilizing significant US Lacrosse assets to make a meaningful case for fundraising, including Sports Science and Safety for research, First Stick for opportunity to play and Gold Stick for best practices. US Lacrosse must also increase revenues derived from sponsorship, advertising and strategic alliances. The national prominence of US Lacrosse as the National Governing Body of the sport, combined with the increased national profile and visibility of the sport of lacrosse, create the opportunity to generate substantial revenues from businesses that serve the sport of lacrosse, the lacrosse community or are hoping to create a connection with US Lacrosse.

- **Goal: Increase individual member value and increase market share.**

  Suggested Strategies:

  - Continue to strengthen youth membership through relationships with program administrators, researched and relevant value proposition, assistance from regional staff and volunteers and targeted marketing and communications based on market segment profiles and trends for members and non-members.
  - Refine strategies and strengthen value propositions for retention of youth members from middle school to high school.
  - Refine strategies and strengthen value propositions for adult players.
  - Develop strategies specifically to defend against loss of "insurance-only" members.

Rationale and intent: As set forth above, US Lacrosse is a membership organization and membership fees are the single largest source of financial support for the organization. US Lacrosse must constantly be focused on establishing clear individual member value and organizational/team/league value, educating members and non-members about the value of

membership in US Lacrosse and striving to increase its overall market share of prospective members.

Primary Staff Liaisons: CFO; Managing Director, Membership; Managing Director, Marketing & Communications

- **Goal: Increase contributions from donors and grants.**

  Suggested Strategies:

  - Continue to strengthen financial development capacity through relationships with all past, present and prospective donors and grant sources, based on market segment profiles and trends for members and non-members.
  - Utilize US Lacrosse assets, programmatic and financial, to retain and expand its donor base with case-making for specific causes.
  - Coordinate case-making, market assessment and approaches with membership, chapters and advocacy initiatives.

Rationale and intent: The Strategic Planning Committee believes that there is significant financial development potential for the organization through increased donor and grant support. The organization must continue to make the case that as the National Governing Body of the sport of lacrosse and the leader in delivering programs and services designed to fuel the growth of the sport, contributions to US Lacrosse have a meaningful impact on the sport. The case for support exists within the programs, services and assets of the organization. Strengthening the chapter network and delivering programs and services through chapters provides US Lacrosse with an expanded reach into the prospective donor community.

Primary Staff Liaisons: CFO; Managing Director, US Lacrosse Foundation

- **Goal: Increase non-member sources of support.**

  Suggested Strategies:

  - Maximize and leverage partnerships.
  - Further engage lacrosse manufacturing and retailing industries for sponsorships
  - Maximize non-endemic corporate sponsorships.
  - Expand advertising revenue in non-endemic areas.
  - Further utilize digital media assets to create revenue.

Rationale and intent: As the National Governing Body of lacrosse, US Lacrosse is ideally positioned to establish sponsorship relationships and strategic alliances with both lacrosse oriented organizations and third party organizations not directly involved with the sport of lacrosse that nevertheless desire to be associated with the sport for strategic reasons. The Strategic Planning Committee believes that there are significant opportunities to increase financial support from organizations that value the ability to publicize a direct relationship with and support for US Lacrosse and its programs and services.

Primary Staff Liaison: Managing Director, Marketing and Communications

Strategic Priority: Elevate the visibility of the organization and sport.

Overview: During its first 14 years of existence, US Lacrosse operations and related infrastructure have evolved significantly, primarily due to growing support from the organization's membership program. Far greater awareness and understanding of US Lacrosse, its ongoing impact and its goals/aspirations on behalf of the sport are, however, essential to the organization's ability to increase the political and financial resources required to more effectively pursue its mission. Having established itself as the sport's National Governing Body and grown its membership base to more than 400,000, US Lacrosse is uniquely positioned to raise its profile among the national lacrosse community, as well as provide a leadership role in the further promotion of lacrosse nationally and internationally. As part of that process, US Lacrosse must define and promote its relationship to the entire sport of lacrosse as played in various ways in a manner that strengthens the perception and awareness of US Lacrosse as the National Governing Body of all of lacrosse.

- **Goal: Develop and implement prioritized branding and sanctioning strategies for lacrosse events and programs.**

  Suggested Strategies:

  - Review, redefine and reclassify US Lacrosse "mission critical properties" in an effort to further clarify the highest and best use of limited organizational resources.
  - Define the relationship between US Lacrosse and "box" lacrosse in a manner that supports the perception and awareness of US Lacrosse as the National Governing Body of all of lacrosse.
  - Develop and deploy sanctioning strategies for lacrosse events run by and independently from US Lacrosse, as well as US Lacrosse education programs.

Rationale and intent: Limited resources and considerable private-sector competition require US Lacrosse to be disciplined and strategic in its event platform. US Lacrosse must establish an attractive value proposition that enables the organization to collaborate with dozens of regional events in order to cost-effectively scale an impactful national marketing platform, as well as successfully drive adoption of US Lacrosse standards and best practices.

Primary Staff Liaison: Managing Director of Marketing & Communications

- **Goal: Establish multi-faceted public relations strategies to increase awareness of US Lacrosse and the sport of lacrosse.**

Rationale and intent: Significantly increasing US Lacrosse relevance and influence, as well as generating greater financial and advocacy support, requires far greater knowledge of the organization's operations and aspirations within the national lacrosse community. US Lacrosse must develop, finance and effectively deploy a national public relations program that will significantly raise the profile of the organization as an essential component of the sport's future, inform the national lacrosse community of the significant issues facing the sport's responsible development and explain the vital role US Lacrosse will play in addressing these issues, which will lead to greater financial and advocacy support for the organization, its strategic priorities and goals.

Primary Staff Liaison: Managing Director of Marketing & Communications

Operational Accountability for Strategic Plan. The President and Chief Executive Officer of US Lacrosse shall have operational accountability for implementation and progress made on each of the strategic priorities and related goals. Although the Strategic Planning Committee has suggested a variety of strategies, detailed strategies will be developed by staff under the direction of the Chief Executive Officer. The development and implementation of specific strategies for the 5 strategic priorities will necessarily include significant contributions from the Board of Directors of US Lacrosse and its committee structure in connection with the resource allocation required to achieve meaningful and impactful success in each area of strategic priority for US Lacrosse set forth in the Strategic Plan.

Ongoing Role of Strategic Planning Committee. The Strategic Planning Committee exists as a standing committee of US Lacrosse. Although the committee has not yet developed a proposed charter that outlines the specific responsibilities of the Strategic Planning Committee for presentation to the Board of Directors of US Lacrosse for approval, the Strategic Planning Committee does believe that its ongoing role in relation to the Strategic Plan must include the following:

- The development in conjunction with staff of performance measures and metrics in relation to each strategic priority that can be utilized by the Strategic Planning Committee to evaluate the success of the implementation of each strategic priority.
- The evaluation of the implementation of the Strategic Plan in relation to the performance measures and metrics developed by the Strategic Planning Committee.
- Interacting with the US Lacrosse budget process in a timely manner beginning in August of each year in order to provide meaningful strategic plan input.
- Reporting to the Board of Directors on the status of the implementation of the Strategic Plan in relation to the established performance measures and metrics as frequently as necessary, but not less often than annually.
- Identifying and recommending suggested modifications to the Strategic Plan based upon the ongoing review and evaluation of the Strategic Plan by the Committee in relation to the mission, vision and values of US Lacrosse.
- Strategic planning for US Lacrosse beyond the 3-year period during which the 2013-15 Strategic Plan is in effect.
- Such other duties and responsibilities as the Board of Directors of US Lacrosse may require.

The Strategic Planning Committee intends to develop a draft charter that sets forth in detail the duties and responsibilities of the Committee for presentation to the Board of Directors of US Lacrosse at its January, 2013 meeting.

Conclusion. The Strategic Planning Committee believes strongly that the strategic priorities that are set forth in the Strategic Plan must be embraced and implemented as a whole. They represent interdependent priorities that are intended to work together as the means to strengthen US Lacrosse and empower it to achieve its mission and vision in a manner consistent at all times with the US Lacrosse values. These strategic priorities are intended to solidify the position of US Lacrosse as the National Governing Body of lacrosse, the leader of lacrosse in the United States and a significant leader of lacrosse internationally. With a consistent focus on youth, the strategic priorities are intended to increase membership and overall participation in the sport, educate the lacrosse consumer in a positive way, decrease barriers to participation and ensure a quality lacrosse experience for all participants.

US LACROSSE
STRATEGIC PLAN – 2013-15
SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND ASSOCIATED GOALS

Strategic Priority: Enhance the quality of the lacrosse experience for participants.

- Goal: Promote and preserve game integrity and player safety.
- Goal: Promote a positive sports culture and climate.
- Goal: Empower and mobilize parents to drive US Lacrosse standards.
- Goal: Utilize Sports Science & Safety Committee as a key resource for improving safety and enjoyment of the game for players and fans.

Strategic Priority: Strengthen access and opportunity for all.

- Goal: Develop, prioritize and establish strategies to increase participation for underrepresented and underserved individuals.
- Goal: Develop cost effective solutions for entry into the game.
- Goals: Establish and implement a strategy to address capacity at all levels of lacrosse for access to and affordability of fields and facilities.

Strategic Priority: Strengthen/modify US Lacrosse's structure/infrastructure to enhance the capacity to lead and serve.

- Goal: Develop and implement a regional structure.
- Goal: Strengthen chapters.
- Goal: Maximize volunteer/staff synergy.
- Goal: Develop and implement strategies that promote collaborative efforts among US Lacrosse, its chapters and youth leagues to advocate, deliver and utilize US Lacrosse's programs and services.
- Goal: Resolve the issue of a new national headquarters in a manner consistent with the strategic priorities of the organization.

Strategic Priority: Strengthen and ensure long-term financial viability.

- Goal: Increase individual member value and increase market share.
- Goal: Increase contributions from donors and grants.
- Goal: Increase non-member sources of support.

Strategic Priority: Elevate the visibility of the organization and sport.

- Goal: Develop and implement prioritized branding and sanctioning strategies for lacrosse events and programs.

Goal: Establish multi-faceted public relations strategies to increase awareness of US Lacrosse and the sport of lacrosse.