

# Background

## What's a strategic plan and why do we need one?

Let's just skip the paraphrasing and quote straight from Wikipedia:

**Strategic planning** is an organization's process of defining its strategy, or direction, and making decisions on allocating its resources to pursue this strategy. In order to determine the direction of the organization, it is necessary to understand its current position and the possible avenues through which it can pursue a particular course of action. Generally, strategic planning deals with at least one of three key questions:<sup>[1]</sup>

"What do we do?"

"For whom do we do it?"

"How do we excel?"

In many organizations, this is viewed as a process for determining where an organization is going over the next year or—more typically—3 to 5 years (long term), although some extend their vision to 20 years.

The key components of 'strategic planning' include an understanding of the firm's vision, mission, values and strategies. (Often a "Vision Statement" and a "Mission Statement" may encapsulate the vision and mission).

**Mission:** Defines the fundamental purpose of an organization or an enterprise, succinctly describing why it exists and what it does to achieve its vision. For example, a charity working with the poor might have a mission statement as "providing jobs for the homeless and unemployed".

**Vision:** outlines what the organization wants to be, or how it wants the world in which it operates to be (an "idealised" view of the world). It is a long-term view and concentrates on the future. It can be emotive and is a source of inspiration. For example, the charity above might have a vision statement which reads "A World without Poverty."

**Values:** Beliefs that are shared among the stakeholders of an organization. Values drive an organization's culture and priorities and provide a framework in which decisions are made. For example, "Knowledge and skills are the keys to success" or "give a man bread and feed him for a day, but teach him to farm and feed him for life". These example maxims may set the priorities of self-sufficiency over shelter.

**Strategy:** Strategy, narrowly defined, means "the art of the general" - a combination of the ends (goals) for which the firm is striving and the means (policies) by which it is seeking to get there. A strategy is sometimes called a roadmap - which is the path chosen to plow towards the end vision. The most important part of implementing the strategy is ensuring the company is going in the right direction which is towards the end vision.

## What have we accomplished so far?

In December 2012, the Board of Directors spent a full day discussing the above aspects of EUPA's strategic plan. After they had (mostly) agreed on the major tenets, they invited a group of approximately 20 EUPA members, ranging in age, gender, experience and skill level to give feedback on what had been drafted at that point. Thankfully, there were many commonalities among opinions – but some differences too. Taking into account the feedback we've received so far, the Board of Directors is now able to share with you the Vision, Mission and Values we are proposing for EUPA, along with the 'pillars' or main areas of focus for the strategic plan. Together, these statements will shape our 3 year strategic plan.

## What happens now?

We'd like to hear your feedback on what we've developed, and if that goes well, we'll continue to roll out more and more of the strategy details as we incorporate your feedback. Ideally, we'd like to ratify this Strategic Plan at the Annual General Meeting on October 22, 2013. We've set up a simple survey that will allow you to give feedback on the various sections of the plan. You will be able to answer anonymously or leave your name for follow up questions. Survey will close September 23, 2013.

## Why doesn't the Board just do this themselves?

EUPA is a not for profit organization that is run by its members. Although we pay a General Manager, the large decisions regarding how our organization operates are made by an elected, volunteer Board of Directors. The organization belongs to you and you have a say. We're not saying everything you suggest will be literally incorporated into governance practice. We all have different opinions, and, hey - elected officials are elected to make decisions. However, it's important that you own this plan as much as they do - see the second plan pillar regarding internal community.

# Strategic Planning 2013-2016

## Feedback Stage 1:

### Proposed EUPA Mission

To advance the sport of Ultimate in the Edmonton area and foster a culture based on sportsmanship, integrity and community that embodies Spirit of the Game.

### Proposed EUPA Vision

EUPA is a leader among sports organizations, and provides quality opportunities to learn and play Ultimate within a welcoming community.

### Proposed EUPA Values

Spirit of the Game  
Community  
Development  
Integrity

### Proposed Plan Pillars:

These are the proposed areas of focus for the organization over the next 3 years.

1. Spirit of the Game: Increase the enjoyment of all EUPA members through awareness of and commitment to SOTG and knowledge of the rules.
2. Community: *Internal:* Create a culture of ownership, belonging, engagement, acceptance and fun for all current and potential EUPA members. *External:* Increase the awareness of Ultimate and the interconnectivity of Ultimate within the Edmonton sport community.
3. Player Development: Provide opportunities to increase the level of skill development for all players within their context.
4. Capacity: Increase the efficiency, efficacy and sustainability of EUPA programs.
5. Participation: Retain current participants while sustainably increasing the number of new individuals playing in, involved with and exposed to EUPA programs