***“Enriching lives, raising spirits, and bringing quality to life.”***

177 Defense Highway, Suite 9
Annapolis, MD 21401
410-266-5722

Three-Year Strategic Plan

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## INTRODUCTION

Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating (CRAB) is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to making the recreational, educational and therapeutic benefits of sailing and the freedom it provides a reality for physically and/or developmentally-challenged individuals and their families regardless of their financial circumstances; wounded warriors; and, local children from at-risk communities.

CRAB was founded in 1991 as an offshoot of the National Ocean Access Project of Newport, Rhode Island. CRAB operates out of Sandy Point State Park at the western side of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and maintains an office in Annapolis, MD. CRAB relies heavily on volunteers to skipper and crew our boats during the season. Part-time, paid Fleet Directors work to maintain the fleet and to oversee the skippers and crew at CRAB sailing programs. CRAB’s Office is managed by a full-time, paid Executive Director and a full-time, paid Operations Manager. During the sailing season an intern is hired to provide additional support. Volunteers also support CRAB Committees such as Marketing, Development, or HomePort activities for the association.

CRAB operates a fleet of six Beneteau First 22A’s (A for adaptive). The First 22A has two seats installed that accommodate persons who need to be secured in the cockpit. The sails consist of a fully battened mainsail with two reef-points, lazy jacks for ease of raising and lowering sails, and a roller furling jib. The boats are steered with a tiller and can be sailed by a person with disabilities, with or without the aid of an able bodied crew person(s). CRAB also owns a Martin 16 sailboat (the only one on Chesapeake Bay) with a “sip and puff” electronic control system, allowing guest skippers with limited mobility to control the boat’s rudder and sails using their breath.

## PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

As the *Maryland Nonprofits Standards for Excellence: An Ethics and Accountability Code for the Nonprofit Sector* states:

**Board Responsibilities**

The Board should engage in long–term and short–term planning activities as necessary to determine the mission of the organization, to define specific goals and objectives related to the mission, and to evaluate the success of the organization’s programs toward achieving the mission.

Strategic Planning comes in many forms, and the choice of approach should be informed by the current status of the organization. CRAB is in a period of incredible growth and prosperity on many fronts. In 2017, the aging fleet of 30-year old Catalina Freedom 20’s was replaced by six brand new Beneteau First 22A’s (A for adaptive). CRAB also has implemented new training and safety protocols for volunteer skippers and crew that has resulted in greater professionalism and confidence in our volunteers. It also has served to increase the interest in volunteering as a skipper or crew for CRAB and the organization has record numbers of volunteers.

In 2017, CRAB also received its first funding from the government. A Maryland Bond Bill for $75,000 for new boats was passed and signed by the Legislature and Board of Public Works. These funds were used to offset the cost of the new First 22A’s and CRAB now owns the fleet of six new sailboats free and clear of any debt.

CRAB continues to expand its sailing program to include more Kids Sailing Camps with the Anne Arundel County and City of Annapolis Police Departments. In 2018, four camps will be held with an expected attendance of 75 children from at-risk communities. This is a doubling of the number of sailing camps held in 2017.

CRAB continues to work closely with other non-profit organizations representing the interests of persons with disabilities in the State of Maryland, Washington, DC and Virginia. In 2017, Group Sails were held for 17 organizations across the region. While there is no charge for this program for a single, sail event, CRAB has initiated a Patron Program that provides for the organization to make a donation to CRAB for regularly scheduled Group Sails.

One major initiative that CRAB has earned substantial recognition for CRAB at the State, County, and City level has been the effort to acquire a marina in Annapolis for the creation of a premier Adaptive Boating Center. Due to the increasing limitations on dock space for CRAB’s fleet and limited access on weekends at Sandy Point State Park for our guests this effort has gained greater importance. The expansion of CRAB’s fleet, programs, and number of guests served in the future is highly dependent upon the acquisition of a marina for an Adaptive Boating Center.

This report is intended to be a concise, short, and simple summary of the most important actions that will need to be addressed over the next three years in order for CRAB to thrive and grow:

1. We must focus on improving, developing and expanding our programs in order to better serve our constituency
2. We must provide a secure and solid financial long-term foundation for CRAB’s continued success
3. The CRAB Staff must have an Adaptive Boating Center to have the resources to continue to expand programs and services offered to a growing number of guests who benefit from sailing and/or boating.

## INITIATIVES:

GOAL #1: CRAB will endeavor to create an Adaptive Boating Center in Annapolis by building consensus and support from State, County, and City elected leaders and government officials. The initiation of a Capital Campaign to generate the necessary matching funds necessary for this project will be a primary objective the Board of Directors and Development Committee.

Specific Objectives:

1.1 Focus on the marina that has a letter of intent signed with CRAB the cost associated with its acquisition, upgrading, and modifications necessary to ensure it is safe and easily accessible by CRAB guests and provides for a high-quality environment for socialization and a wide range of boating activities.

1.2 Work with State, County, and City elected leaders to gain their commitment for the acquisition and development of an Adaptive Boating Center. Work to increase the priority for the project in their capital budgets in the coming fiscal year.

1.3 Research, engage, and work with family foundations in the region who may be interested in supporting the Capital Campaign.

1.4 The CRAB Board of Directors will be the primary driving force in enlisting and encouraging donors by leading by example and making a commitment that is both meaningful and productive.

 1.5 The CRAB Board of Directors and Executive Director will create a one-year financial proforma for the $1,250,000 Capital Campaign that includes anticipated capital costs and government grants for the acquisition and build-out of the Adaptive Boating Center.

GOAL #2: Expand and enhance CRAB’s financial foundation by expanding the donated boat and grant-writing programs. Have contracted employees assume responsibility under the guidance and oversight of CRAB Staff to become proactively engaged and responsive to expanding these two programs and the revenue they can generate for CRAB on an annual basis.

Specific Objectives:

* 1. CRAB Staff will engage the services of a yacht broker who has a high level of interest in supporting CRAB’s mission and programs to build up the current boat donation program to a level that is double its current income.
	2. The yacht broker should work to expand the reach of donations and the other brokers who can sell boats in other cities without CRAB’s direct involvement.
	3. The grant writer shall be responsible for researching, qualifying and confirming grants that CRAB is eligible to receive based on current programs, services, and guests.
	4. The grant writer will create a list of grants that CRAB is eligible to compete for; the date the grants are due; and, the necessary information to be in compliance with the grant request.
	5. The grant writer will work with CRAB Staff to ensure the information and materials submitted are the latest information and are accurate for purposes of the grantor’s evaluation.

GOAL #3: Expand the reach and service area of CRAB’s boating program to regional centers for persons with disabilities, especially wounded warriors, in Washington, DC and Norfolk, VA.

* 1. Focus on anchor organizations in each community that would be interested in supporting a long-term, sponsorship of CRAB’s operations in their community.
	2. Find suitable locations with floating docks, adequate parking, and other facilities necessary to support CRAB’s operations in these new locations.
	3. Discuss this initiative with local leaders and sailing/boating organizations who may be interested in supporting this initiative and potentially manage the operations using CRAB’s operations and program models.