Building For The Future

A four-year strategic plan (2027-30) for Nelson Soccer Association to bring the benefits of soccer to all in Nelson and the surrounding region.



Defining Who We Are And Where We Want To Be

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Nelson Soccer Association (NSA), I am delighted to unveil our new strategic plan to you! This plan, built carefully over the course of 2026, crystallizes our strategic priorities for the next four years, and beyond, so we can build on the incredible work that has already been done at NSA, and drive for an even better future.



This plan will allow your Board of Directors to make informed strategic decisions, better direct staff in their work, and focus the Association on activities that we know are value-adding to our membership and community at large.

Our plan brings prudence and careful consideration to our activities after a period where rapid growth in our programming offerings has stretched our governing and operational capacity. Now is the time for consolidation and careful planning of future growth. It is time to remember clearly who we are as an organization, where we have come from, and who we serve.

Through this plan, I believe we have mapped out a path to effectively do this.

We've taken this planning process seriously. With the engagement of sports management consultancy Capitis Consulting, we've reached out and spoken to all our stakeholders – both within the Association and outside – to truly understand what is expected of us. And from this feedback, we've identified impactful strategic goals in the core areas of Operations, Soccer Activities and Community Building that we are excited about accomplishing.



Take a few minutes to review our plan and you'll find goals that modernize our governance and operations to better serve our members. You'll see a recommitment to excellence in both our recreational and development programs and new ambition in coach and referee development. And you'll discover our commitment to the Nelson community, through value-adding outreach programs targeting key community groups and a continued drive for soccer facilities development.

I want to thank the many people in Nelson and the surrounding community who gave feedback and opinions that informed this plan. Without this support, the plan is just words on a piece of paper. But with your validation, our plan is a compelling call-to-action that I urge you to get behind and support!

See you on the pitch!



STEFAN HUMPHRIES

CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
NELSON SOCCER ASSOCIATION

Nelson Soccer Association — *Four-Year Strategic Plan (2027-30)*

VISION

(Utopian statement of what NSA wants the future to look like)

"Everyone in our community has the opportunity to be bettered by their involvement in the sport of soccer."

MISSION

(What NSA fundamentally does to move its Vision)

"To create the best soccer experiences that inspire people to return for life."

VALUES

(Beliefs that define what we stand for as an organization and seek to foster in our people)

Fun



We know that enjoyment is fundamental to people's decision to participate and return to anything. We recognize that all soccer activities, regardless of whether they are recreational or competitive, must be fun for not just the players, but also the coaches, officials, volunteers and spectators.

Integrity



We understand that integrity is about what you choose to do when people aren't watching. We believe integrity is foundational to the concept of accountability and fundamentally being a good person. Self-accountability is central to our success as individuals and collectively as an organization.

Community



We view our organization as being the property of the communities of Nelson and the surrounding region. We believe our role is to connect and bind the communities we serve, making them more healthy, productive and inclusive while improving community livability through soccer participation.

Excellence



We believe in pursuing the best version of ourselves both on the field of play and in our broader lives. We understand that excellence transcends technical skill or the score of the game. We promote bringing our best to all corners of our organization and openly celebrate the success that this behaviour brings.



"Nelson residents see important community values espoused in the culture and identity of Nelson Soccer Association. The strategic plan we have built is a reflection of that."

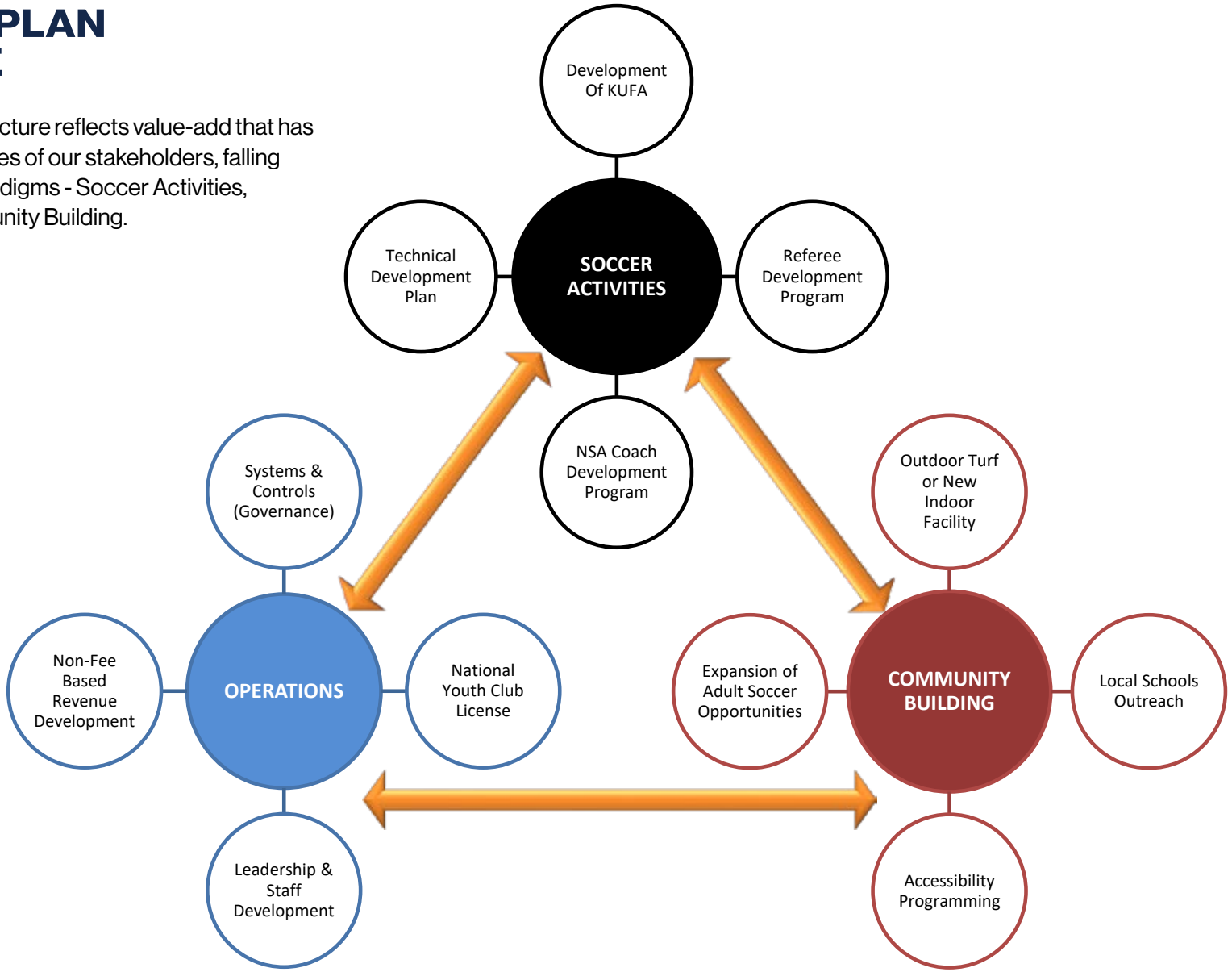
Paul Varian

President

Capitis Consulting

STRATEGIC PLAN STRUCTURE

Our strategic plan's structure reflects value-add that has been identified in the eyes of our stakeholders, falling into three strategic paradigms - Soccer Activities, Operations and Community Building.



STRATEGIC PLAN CONTENT

Our Master KPI: Overall Player Retention Is At 85% Or More.



OPERATIONS

As NSA grows and its program skew proliferates, its operations become more complex. We recognize that increased investment in the Association's operational capacity and capability is needed to build the sophistication needed to provide value to our members and other stakeholders.

1. **Invest in the human capital needed for total management of NSA's full operations**

   Core KPI: NSA participant satisfaction with ops/admin function is at +80%.

   a. *Recruit executive leadership that allows the Board of Directors to freely govern*
   b. *Hire administrative support needed to manage NSA's expanding operations, allowing technical staff to focus on technical matters*
   c. *Establish targeted volunteer-filled operating committees to fulfill certain operating functions (eg. tournaments and events)*

Rationale: NSA's operational and administrative function scores largely under 70% in terms of satisfaction with NSA participants.

2. **Move the Board of Directors to be a policy Board, with associated committee structure and granted levels of executive authority**

   Core KPI: +90% of Director terms are fulfilled; Director return rate is at +70%.

   a. *Establish Standing Committees in the areas of finance/audit, executive management and governance/risk*
   b. *Remove Directors from all operational activities and committees*
   c. *Establish a broader framework of organization-wide policies, including those that govern executive limitations and fiscal oversight*
   d. *Establish an enterprise-wide risk management strategy*

Rationale: The Board is experiencing significant Director burn-out and inefficiencies in the management of responsibilities between Board and staff.

3. **Establish robust and modernized systems of operational management and control**

   Core KPI: Annual financial reporting is completed within two months of year-end close and quarterly financial reporting is completed within one month of quarter-end.

   a. *Establish digital systems that improve the efficiency of staff and enhance NSA user experience across the entire organization*
   b. *Design and document procedures for the Association's accounts clerical function, particularly its accounts payable function*
   c. *Establish policies and procedures for operational oversight, particularly with respect to financial oversight, spending risk and reserves management*
   d. *Drive payment of human resources away from casual payments, to formalized payroll with declared T4 or T4A status*

Rationale: NSA has struggled with inefficiency in staff workflow and underdevelopment of its accounting and finance function.

4. **Drive enhanced non-fee based revenue streams**

   Core KPI: Non fee-based revenue is at +20% of total revenue.

   a. *Pursue corporate sponsorship opportunities at regional level, leveraging sponsorship assets associated with KUFA*
   b. *Explore the possibilities of establishing a structured fundraising program*
   c. *Continue to explore and avail ourselves of grant funding opportunities at all levels of government and through Foundation organizations*

Rationale: Non fee-based revenue has declined from 34.5% of total revenue in 2019 to 12.5% in 2025.

5. **Build the requirements needed to attain a CSA National Youth Club License (NYCL)**

   Core KPI: NSA is in a position to lodge an application for a National Youth Club License.

   a. *Strike an ad-hoc committee of the Board of Directors to drive the project*
   b. *Build requirements for NYCL application, using specialist support as needed*

Rationale: National Youth Club Licence status is required for NSA to pursue higher soccer development opportunities in BC and Canada.

SOCCER ACTIVITIES

We are committed to bringing the gift of soccer to everyone who wants it in Nelson and the surrounding region. To do so, we recognize that we must continue to expand our soccer programming to provide the right options for all, regardless of their age, level of play or desired commitment level.

1. **Establish an enterprise-wide technical plan, informing the technical development of all players at NSA, and the coaching infrastructure that facilitates it.**

Core KPI: A technical plan has been developed and communicated to all NSA coaches, players & parents.

a. *Establish a clearly-communicated player pathway within the Association, indicating where each soccer program offered fits in*
b. *Properly define NSA's game model, approach to training and playing identity*
c. *Enshrine coach development into NSA's technical planning approach*
d. *Establish definitive branding differentials between KUFA and NSA, and the programming offers they present*
e. *Clearly define how NSA/KUFA measures sporting success, including metrics that collectively value technical excellence, player well-being and sportsmanship*





"At NSA, we are committed to providing fun recreational and development programs for every player, at all levels, and building a high quality coaching team to deliver them."

Brett Adams
Technical Director
Nelson Soccer Association

2. Establish an in-house coach development program

Core KPI: NSA coaches rate their development at the Association at +70%.

a. *Establish coach mentorships and peer-based coaching support to new, inexperienced and recreational coaches*
b. *Target the qualification of high potential coaches with higher coaching awards (C License and higher)*
c. *Establish a structured system of coach evaluation, targeted to specific coaches on higher development trajectories*

Rationale: NSA coaches rate their development at the Association well below their enjoyment of coaching (64.6% vs 83.4%) and only a handful of NSA coaches have advanced soccer coaching qualifications.



3. Continue the development of KUFA as NSA's core vehicle for player development

Core KPI: +20% of former KUFA players are playing (or have played) at higher levels of soccer (including college, university and/or in other advanced development leagues).

a. *Develop a fully annualized, periodized training curriculum for KUFA*
b. *Formalize structured partnerships and supplier agreements in the areas of sport science and medicine*
c. *Develop player pathway options for KUFA graduates into adult soccer at provincial level and higher*
d. *Drive NSA's core values into the culture of KUFA, and in people who participate in it*

Rationale: Over 53% of NSA participants associate the organization with competitiveness and the Association currently serves a significant player base in the broader Nelson region where player development opportunities do not exist.

4. Promote match officiating as a participation option at NSA

Core KPI: The volume of NSA youth match officials (U16 and younger) has increased by 30%.

a. *Establish a match officials promotion program for Nelson's local schools*
b. *Enshrine the promotion of match officiating careers in in-house coach development, to ensure young players are aware of it as a participation option at the Association*
c. *Commence a structured referee mentor program, targeting first-year, rookie match officials*
d. *Continue monitoring of match official abuse and promotion of respectful match environments*

Rationale: Match officiating is a viable participation pathway for NSA youth, particularly those who do not see a long-term playing future in the game.

5. **Expand NSA's adult soccer programming**

   Core KPI: NSA's adult soccer registrations have increased by 25% on an aggregate basis.

   a. *Review adult recreational competition systems with respect to competitiveness and levels of play*
   b. *Explore leveraging adult soccer programs to drive community inclusion strategic goals*
   c. *Explore the establishment of an annual provincial adult soccer tournament*

Rationale: NSA's adult soccer participant base has grown by 61.8% from 2021-22 to 2025-26 and the percentage of female adult participants has grown from 30.9% to 37.6% over this period.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

We understand that NSA is essentially the property of its community. We serve our community and understand that, in doing so, we secure our future as an organization through what we bring to fundamental livability in where we live. To that end, we are mindful that we play a greater role than simply providing soccer programs to our fee-paying members. We have community obligations and civic expectations that we openly embrace and promote.

1. **Establish soccer participation outreach soccer programming targeting local schools**

   Core KPI: New soccer registrants are coming from the schools program and NSA is conducting soccer programming on Nelson schools facilities.

   a. *Identify and connect with local school leadership*
   b. *Explore granting opportunities and/or other government-offered program funding opportunities*
   c. *Explore partnership opportunities with sports that bring programming and coaching opportunities directly into local schools, in return for school sports facilities access and player enrollment opportunities for school kids at NSA*



Rationale: NSA has no formal relationships with Nelson's school system and a mutual value-add appears achievable through a partnership that shares soccer programming expertise, facilities and kids.

2. **Establish outreach programs targeting community groups who do not have access to NSA's programs and activities**

   Core KPI: The volume of kids participating in NSA soccer programs through its financial assistance programming activities has doubled.

   a. *Move to strike a partnership with the Nelson chapter of KidSport BC (targeting kids experiencing financial barriers to participating in organized sport)*
   b. *Explore the feasibility of an outreach program targeting indigenous youth in the Nelson region*

Rationale: NSA participants rate the importance of removing financial barriers for soccer participation in the community at 74%.

3. **Explore the possibilities of the development of new sports facilities in Nelson or the surrounding region that help facilitate year-round soccer activities**

   Core KPI: A definitive site for either a new outdoor turf field or an indoor sports centre (for soccer use) has been solidified, and the facility's development is underway.

   a. *Establish a strong working relationship with the Regional District of Central Kootenay in relation to possible sites for a new indoor sports centre and/or an outdoor turf soccer field*
   b. *Form a working group with other like-minded local sports clubs/ associations, to collaborate with on facilities development proposals*
   c. *Establish a business plan and development proposal for agreed turf and/or indoor facilities at an agreed site*

Rationale: New sports facilities have been identified by NSA participants as the most important strategic priority for the Association (83.4% agreement).

4. **Drive higher participation of females in all aspects of the Association**

   Core KPI: Participation rates among young females at NSA are up 5%.

   a. *Target 15-20 year old females for leadership positions in committees, coaching opportunities and match officiating*
   b. *Establish a women-in-sport networking and social program, connecting women involved in NSA to mutually develop opportunities*

Rationale: Participation rates among young females at NSA are on the decline – down 2.3% from 2021-22 to 2025-26.



"As a female coach, I am proud to see Nelson Soccer Association's commitment to the development of girls and women and the promotion of leadership opportunities for them. It is exciting to see this cemented in the organization's strategic ambition."

Marlisa Crosland
Coach
Nelson Soccer Association



A PLAN BUILT ON COMMUNITY FEEDBACK!

This strategic plan was not created in a vacuum. Instead, it is the cumulative product of the ideas, opinions, observations, wants and needs of a plethora of people and organizations who connected in some way with Nelson Soccer Association

The Board of Directors of Nelson Soccer Association would like to thank the +325 players, parents, coaches, match officials and volunteers who contributed to the Plan.

In particular, NSA would like to acknowledge the input from:

- Chris Johnson, GM of Community Planning, Climate and Infrastructure, City of Nelson
- Trisha Davison, GM of Community Services, Regional District of Central Kootenay
- Lucas Castro, Membership Coordinator, BC Soccer
- Dr. David Little, Sports Medicine Physician
- Lua Gerun, Past NSA Chair & Past Rep Director, NSA
- Chuck Bennett, Past NSA Chair, Co-Chair ECRB, Referee, NSA
- Kelly Mieske, Co-Chair ECRB, Rep Team Manager, NSA"
- Cheryl Dowden, Coach & HR Committee Member, NSA



Nelson Soccer Association would also like to thank the following important partners and sponsors: