

VISION 2030

A 20-year Vision Plan for the Vancouver Lake Sailing Club



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Vision Plan Summary

By 2030, our vision for the club is to achieve...

- ✓ A more active club, with more members and activities, while still retaining much of the club's unique & peaceful atmosphere.
- ✓ A membership of approximately 150 individuals/families, with all members active in sailing and at least 50 percent of our members participating in sailboat racing activities.
- ✓ A diverse membership that includes different skill levels & interests (racing & recreational sailing).
- ✓ A membership that has a higher percentage of young sailors & young families than currently exists.
- ✓ Greater participation by all members in recreational sailing, racing and social activities.
- ✓ A racing program that supports members at all levels of racing, providing a clear pathway of progression for members who wish to develop their racing skills.
- ✓ A racing program that has racing several days per week to accommodate different preferences.
- ✓ Additional one-design fleets so members have several racing choices (i.e., monohull and multihull options, as well as single-hand, 2-person, and 3-person options).
- ✓ An expanded Sailing School that supports all levels of sail and race training.
- ✓ An improved waterfront to allow easier hand launching of boats.
- ✓ An improved clubhouse that can accommodate the increase in membership and activities.
- ✓ A mix of boat storage options that allow all Active members to have on-site access to at least one boat.
- ✓ Enhanced visibility of our club within other sailing organizations and the local community.
- ✓ A dues & fees structure that will keep the club affordable, but still allow growth and improvements to be made over time.

Our Top Recommendations

- Create a task force that will dedicate its efforts towards accelerating the club's membership growth.
- Establish a "Facilities" committee to address immediate issues (e.g., docks, boat storage, clubhouse maintenance, shoreline maintenance) and long-range issues (e.g., land acquisition, land use zoning, clubhouse improvements).
- Continue to expand Sailing School offerings to support all levels of sail and race training.
- Increase the visibility of the club within the local community.

Vision 2030

A 20-year Vision Plan for the Vancouver Lake Sailing Club

Introduction

As the story is told, Vancouver Lake Sailing Club (VLSC) had its humble beginnings back in 1967 when a small group of dinghy racers started dreaming and searching for a better place to race. Looking for an alternative to the Columbia River, this dedicated group took a look at Vancouver Lake and thought it might be an ideal location for racing and sailing. And as they say, the rest is history!

More than 40 years later, VLSC is now an active and growing club. Its membership includes over 100 families, it has an expanding Sailing School, multiple one-design race fleets, and has some of the best racers in the region and country.

So why do we need a Vision Plan? As a group, VLSC members collectively recognize we have a terrific club and that Vancouver Lake is an important community asset. As sailors and racers, we also recognize however that it pays to look ahead, to anticipate the shifts, and to plot the best course that we can.

This Vision Plan is our attempt to chart a winning course for the future. It builds upon the success of the past by looking for new opportunities to improve our club while also promoting sailing and racing. It also gives us a chance to consider how we might increase our visibility in the local community and promote the appreciation of Vancouver Lake as an important community resource.

Vision Planning Process

The official process for this plan began in 2009, although the need for an overall vision plan was discussed for a number of prior years. To start the effort, a group of members volunteered to form a "Vision Committee" and start discussing what a Vision Plan might look like.

Our Vision Statement...

Continue to develop VLSC as an affordable family club that is a premiere center for the racing & sailing of small one-design sailboats.

VLSC will achieve this vision by

- *Creating a sailing, racing & social environment that is affordable, safe & fun.*
- *Managing the club in an efficient & sustainable manner.*
- *Promoting VLSC & the sport of sailing within other sailing organizations & the local community.*
- *Promoting the enjoyment, appreciation & care of Vancouver Lake within the local community.*
- *Providing a training framework that will help improve the sailing & racing skills of all club members.*
- *Promoting & conducting high quality & competitive racing events & regattas.*
- *Fostering an environment that encourages long-term membership in the club and active member participation in all sailing, social & club management activities.*
- *Providing special efforts to encourage family participation & development of youth sailing.*
- *Improving our facilities as needed to support our programs & meet expectations of our members.*
- *Finding ways to honor & learn from members who have a long history with the club & the sport of sailboat racing.*

The Committee began meeting on a regular basis to discuss different strategies and decided the first step would be to conduct a survey of club members (see Appendix A). With the survey results in hand, the committee created a set of goals, objectives and possible actions contained in this document.

Plan Scope & Limitations

This plan is designed to help guide the development of the club in the years to come by bringing focus to the major issues and opportunities. It is also specifically designed as a tool that the Board of Directors will adopt and use to help make future decisions about club activities and priorities.

The Vision Committee chose a 20-year target when crafting this plan. There is nothing particularly significant about the 20-year focus, other than the committee's desire to take a long-term perspective in this effort while also recognizing it may take a period of years to achieve some of the goals. This does not mean to imply that initiatives should be equally dispersed across this timeframe. The Committee firmly believes that we should attempt to achieve the goals in this plan as quickly as possible and practical.

Finally, it is important to note that the current version of this plan represents a single point in time. This plan should be reviewed and updated each year to reflect any new opportunities that can help the club achieve its primary mission.

Club's Purpose & Future Vision

Any plan for the future of the club must largely be based on the club's underlying purpose as stated in the club by-laws and charter. The purpose of VLSC, as currently stated in the by-laws is

- *To promote the sailing and racing of small, one-design sailboats.*
- *To provide sailing educational, social, and racing events for its members.*

An important step undertaken by the Vision Committee was to review this stated purpose to determine if changes were needed. The Committee concluded that the club's purpose, as currently stated, has reflected the founders' intentions well for decades, and is ideally-suited as a unifying theme for the club's future activities and development. Using the club's stated purpose as the base, the committee developed a Vision Statement to guide the specific plan elements (see sidebar on page 4).

Vision Committee

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Vision Plan Goals, Objectives & Actions

The remainder of this document outlines specific goals and objectives for the following categories:

1. Membership
2. Social & Recreational Sailing Activities
3. Racing Activities & Programs
4. Sailing School & Training Activities
5. Property & Facilities
6. Club Management & Financing
7. Community Relations

Within each category, the goals, objectives and actions are presented in the following format:

1 - Category

Goal = Broad statements of what we hope to accomplish in this category.

1.1 Objectives = More specific elements that help achieve our goals.

1.1.1 Action Items = Specific steps that can help achieve the objectives and goals.

Important! Just because an action item is listed does not mean it should automatically be implemented. Many require further analysis and may not be appropriate, depending upon the circumstances at that time. They are included, however, to spur discussion and perhaps elicit other ideas.

1.1.2 High Priority Action Items are highlighted in yellow. These actions are considered high priority because (1) they can provide important benefits immediately, (2) can help support other goals and objectives, or (3) are fairly easy to implement.

Top Recommendations

This Vision Plan contains a wide range of actions that encompass a wide range of priorities. At first glance this can be a somewhat daunting list, given the club's limited resources. However, the Committee believes that there are four items that deserve immediate special attention and should move to the top of the priority list. These items deserve priority attention because they ultimately support many of the other goals and objectives. These highest-priority actions are:

- Create a task force that will dedicate its efforts towards accelerating the club's membership growth.
- Establish a "Facilities" committee to address immediate issues (e.g., docks, boat storage, clubhouse maintenance, shoreline maintenance) and long-range issues (e.g., land acquisition, land use zoning, clubhouse improvements).
- Continue to expand Sailing School offerings to support all levels of sail and race training.
- Increase the visibility of the club within the local community.

1 - Membership

Goal - Have an active membership that includes a diverse mix of skill levels and interests (racing and recreational sailing). The membership should be of sufficient size to enable the club to develop more robust racing, training, recreational sailing and social activities. Club should create activities & an overall environment that will retain members once they have joined.

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| 1.1 | Objective 1 - Grow the overall membership to achieve a goal of approximately 150 members with all members active in sailing and at least 50 percent of our members participating in sailboat racing activities. |
| 1.1.1 | Create a task force that will dedicate its efforts towards accelerating the club's membership growth. |
| 1.1.2 | Create strategies for converting non-member Sailing School participants into members. |
| 1.1.3 | Create an "Introduction to Sailing" program that targets prospective members. The program would provide an introduction to the club, sailing and racing, and address sailboat options for sailing and racing. |
| 1.1.4 | Encourage non-members who crew to become members. |
| 1.1.5 | Create programs that focus on newcomers to the area who are already sailors and in need of a club. |
| 1.1.6 | Package deals to attract new sailors by giving them an incentive to join and follow a development track to racing. |
| 1.1.7 | Create partnerships with other clubs. |
| 1.1.8 | Create a formal mentorship program with benefits for both the mentor and mentee. |
| 1.1.9 | Market club activities in the local media and increase use of Internet and social networking tools. |
| 1.1.10 | Use incentives to get people to join during special promotional events (e.g., reduced initiation fee as part of the Boat Show, Open House, or regatta). |
| 1.1.11 | Advertise a "Free Sailing Day" to get people to come try the club. |
| 1.1.12 | Create a referral program that provides incentives for existing members to recruit new members into the club. |
| 1.1.13 | Increase visibility of the club by occasionally racing near the City of Vancouver park. |

1.2	Increase the percentage of younger members and families within the overall membership.
1.2.1	Investigate creating new membership category for youth sailors.
1.2.2	Invite area scout troops or youth clubs to learn more about sailing.
1.3	Increase the variety of complementary activities that members can participate in as part of their membership.
1.3.1	Create organized activities that non-sailing family members can participate in when other family members are racing or sailing.
1.3.2	Have more clinics on things like sailing skills, boat maintenance, etc.
1.3.3	Create ability for Active members to store personal equipment or other types of boats people might like to use at the club.

2 – Social & Recreational Sailing Activities

Goal - Increase the participation & satisfaction of members participating in recreational sailing & social activities.

2.1	Increase the percentage of members who actively sail their boats.
2.1.1	Provide organized sailing activities throughout the year to support members' interests in recreational sailing outside of our racing programs.
2.2	Increase member participation in club social activities.
2.2.1	Create mentoring (buddy) program to help integrate new members into club activities.
2.2.2	When new members join, encourage them to become involved in social committees or other initiatives.
2.2.3	Increase efforts to promote events, including after the event occurs.
2.2.4	Create activities that support local / national causes which sailing can benefit from.
2.2.5	Limit number of days used for social events so participation in key events can be concentrated. Combine social events with other activities to maximize participation.
2.2.6	Create special "New Member" social events which emphasize new member introductions and socialization.
2.2.7	Create off-site excursions of interest to members.
2.2.8	Build a better deck/outdoor fun area for socializing and hosting shore-side activities.

3 – Racing Activities & Programs

Goal - Promote & conduct high quality & competitive racing events.

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| 3.1 | Increase the number of club members participating in racing activities. |
| 3.1.1 | Provide racing several days per week to provide additional racing options. |
| 3.2 | Provide racing programs that support members at all levels of racing, providing a clear pathway of progression for members who wish to develop their racing skills.. |
| 3.2.1 | Place more emphasis on developing more entry-level racing opportunities. |
| 3.2.2 | Create a junior racing program. |
| 3.2.3 | Sponsor regular “fun” races. |
| 3.2.4 | Provide loaner boats for members to use for a specific race series. |
| 3.3 | Increase the number of active racing fleets within the club, in order to broaden the available racing options. Efforts should focus on achieving at least five strong racing fleets involving different types of boats (i.e., monohull and multihull options and single hand, 2-person, 3-person options). |
| 3.3.1 | Hold special mini-regattas to introduce the club to outside racers (e.g., 1-day laser regatta). |
| 3.3.2 | Continue to provide incentives to entice creation of new fleets at VLSC. |
| 3.4 | Have a formal way for expert/serious racers to share their knowledge. |
| 3.4.1 | Create a coaching program. |
| 3.4.2 | Create a program focusing on boat inspection and upgrade projects. |
| 3.4.3 | Put a book together that describes some local knowledge and best practices for racing on Vancouver Lake. |
| 3.4.4 | Create incentives and programs for frequent racers. |
| 3.5 | Create better facilities to support high quality racing activity. |
| 3.5.1 | Build a large, sailing equipment shed. |
| 3.5.2 | Create workshops for working on boats. |
| 3.5.3 | Create a new Equipment Manager position. |

4 – Sailing School & Training Activities

Goal - Increase the overall sailing and racing skills of our members. Use our training program as tool for introducing sailing and our club to prospective members.

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| 4.1 | Continue to expand the Sailing School into a robust training program as it has the potential to provide much synergy for many of the other club activities and objectives. |
| | 4.1.1 Expand Sailing School offerings to support all levels of sail and race training. |
| | 4.1.2 Create a junior racing program as part of the Sailing School program. |
| | 4.1.3 Develop relationships with local school districts. |
| | 4.1.4 Support training opportunities at other locations where members may want to travel to attend sailing “camps.” |
| | 4.1.5 Invite area scout troops or youth clubs to come to the club to learn more about the Sailing School. |
| | 4.1.6 Have a sailing skills program that is coordinated with other sailing schools around the area. |
| | 4.1.7 Partner with local organizations that might want to support sailing education. |
| | 4.1.8 Create a designated education facility / structure to keep the school efforts contained in specific area of the property. |
| | 4.1.9 Have a train-the-trainers kind of program that makes it easy for existing members to share what they know with students. |
| 4.2 | Develop a long-term management solution to help guide Sailing School and other educational activities. |
| | 4.2.1 Establish an “Education” committee to provide continuity and Board oversight of the Sailing School and other sail training activities. |

5 – Property & Facilities

Goal - Create and maintain facilities as appropriate to ensure a safe and enjoyable sailing experience and to retain members.

5.1 Create a long-term management solution to help guide property improvements.

- 5.1.1 Establish a "Facilities" committee to address immediate issues (e.g., docks, boat storage, clubhouse maintenance, shoreline maintenance) and long-range issues (e.g., land acquisition, land use zoning, clubhouse improvements). This committee should be given the immediate task of developing facility layout plans to accommodate a minimum of 150 members under the following property ownership scenarios:
- Current property ownership
 - Addition of the residential lot near the SE property corner ("Holly" property).

This committee should also be tasked with monitoring and evaluating possible property acquisitions if properties in the area are available for purchase.

Note: This action item can help support the other objectives listed below.

5.2 Improve clubhouse (new construction or remodel) to ensure it is fun to use and can support a wide range of activities.

- 5.2.1 Evaluate state of health of the existing clubhouse/bathrooms to identify status of major elements and prioritize remodeling and upgrade requirements to meet the needs for VLSC with a membership of 150 members for the next 20 years.

5.2.2 Create a committee and develop a design and construction plan for a new clubhouse.

5.3 Upgrade waterfront to allow easier hand launching of boats.

- 5.3.1 Improve the beach area between the north and middle dock to allow easier water access for training and recreation.

5.4 Ensure that there is a mix of storage options (trailer, rack, dock) and that all Active & Senior Active members have on-site access to at least one boat.

5.4.1 Revise boat storage layout to maximize available storage.

5.4.2 Create storage on the docks.

5.4.3 Create seasonal storage along the shoreline for smaller boats.

5.4.4 Limit the number of boats that members can store unless there is surplus storage space available.

5.4.5 Evaluate the feasibility of allowing members to use club-owned boats.

6 – Club Management & Finance

Goal - Manage the club in an efficient and sustainable manner.

6.1 Begin saving for future improvements and capital expenditures.

6.1.1 Review current dues/fee structure and adjust as needed to generate additional funds.

6.1.2 Establish a budget item and target level for major clubhouse remodel or replacement.

6.2 Find ways to help support club management and reduce workload on Board members.

6.2.1 Evaluate concept of transitioning the Caretaker position into a Club Manager position.

6.2.2 Establish more committees to run club projects and events. At a minimum, this should include a Facilities Committee, Regatta Committee, Education Committee, and Membership Committee

6.3.3 Formalize the committee process to ensure there is sufficient Board oversight and long-term continuity on the committees when needed. This should include a review and modification of the Officers' Duties as specified in the club's by-laws to designate specific Officers to serve on designated committees.

7 – Community Relations

Goal - Promote the sport of sailing and the enjoyment, appreciation and care of Vancouver Lake within the local community.

7.1 Increase visibility of the club within the local community.

7.1.1 Establish an initiative to promote mission and purpose, increase membership and participation, position VLSC as a leader in small craft sailing and racing, and to confirm VLSC as a community partner.

7.1.2 Continue existing outreach efforts (e.g., Portland Boat Show) while also looking for new community outreach opportunities (e.g., Clark County Fair).

7.2 Strengthen associations with entities that have common interests and purposes.

7.2.1 Continue to have club representation on the Vancouver Lake Partnership.

7.2.2 Encourage membership participation in PNW small sailboat racing organizations and local community organizations.