



# Recreation Works For Saskatchewan



## Recreation is

the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community wellbeing.

## We envision

a Saskatchewan where all citizens have equitable access to recreation experiences that:

- Contribute to mental and physical health and wellbeing.
- Result in well-rounded, well-adjusted, contributing members of their community.
- Provide connection and attachment to their communities and environment.

## Saskatchewan Needs Recreation

By 2020, Saskatchewan will be home to over 1.2 million people. This is expected to continue as long as more families and young people decide to stay in Saskatchewan and grow our communities.<sup>1</sup>

Recreation has the potential to meet the needs of our growing Province, and to address social and economic challenges such as increases in obesity and sedentary behavior, inequities that limit participation, and the need for renewed recreation infrastructure in the Province. Recreation supports policies that ensure our communities are designed to maximize opportunities for healthy active living, contributing to the development of stronger families, healthier communities, and a better quality of life for everyone in the Province.

1 Saskatchewan Plan for Growth, 2012

# Priority: Recreation Environments

How will you support the development, renewal and/or expansion of recreation infrastructure and environments in Saskatchewan communities?



## Current Reality

- The majority of Saskatchewan's recreation infrastructure was built in the 1960s and 70s.<sup>1</sup>
- Saskatchewan's recreation infrastructure requires over \$695 million in maintenance.<sup>2</sup>
- Over 95% of Saskatchewan residents recognize nature provides opportunities for recreation, fitness and leisure.<sup>3</sup>
- 46% of sport and recreation facilities are in poor, very poor and fair condition, requiring attention.<sup>4</sup>

## The Need

Nearly every community in Saskatchewan is challenged by aging or inadequate recreation facilities. Long term investment into upgrading recreation infrastructure in Saskatchewan is an investment in the overall health and wellbeing of Saskatchewan people.

Recreation facilities are the heart of Saskatchewan communities and are an essential gathering place for healthy, vibrant communities. Without attention to maintenance and upgrades, Saskatchewan stands to lose its infrastructure legacy for future generations.

Improving recreation environments and infrastructure strengthens the health, vitality, productivity and economy of Saskatchewan communities. If our population continues to grow, but our facilities and built environments remain unsupported by additional development, expansion or renewal, there will be a reduced number of people in the Province with equitable access to recreation facilities and environments, and a decline in the overall quality of life experienced in our communities.<sup>5</sup>

## Economic Potential<sup>6</sup>

**\$2.9 Billion**

Labour income, jobs created by Canada's parks



**\$14.5 Billion**

Amount Canadians spent on nature-based recreational activities



**\$3,773**

Amount spent on recreation by average Canadian household



## The Public Says

*"Community facilities serve as a cornerstone to families and the community as a whole to gather, recreate and get a little exercise."*

Town of Langham

*85% of Saskatchewan respondents strongly agreed to the statement "I value parks and open spaces for the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors."<sup>7</sup>*



## Opportunities for Action

- **Provide recreation facilities and outdoor spaces in under-resourced communities (including on-reserve and in remote areas), based on community and/or regional needs and resources.**
- **Work with partners to increase the use of existing structures and spaces for multiple purposes, including recreation.**
- **Support communities to renew or expand existing recreational infrastructure, as required.**

## Further Reading

<sup>1</sup> Saskatchewan Recreation Inventory Study, 2006

<sup>2</sup> Investing in Healthy People and Communities Through Recreation Infrastructure, 2006

<sup>3</sup> 2012 Canadian Nature Survey

<sup>4</sup> Canadian Infrastructure Report Card, 2016

<sup>5</sup> Saskatchewan Quarterly Population Report 2015

<sup>6</sup> Pathways to Wellbeing: A Framework for Recreation in Canada, 2015

<sup>7</sup> Recreation and the Quality of Life in Saskatchewan, 2015



# Priority: Preventive Health and Active living

How will you support new or existing recreation programs and initiatives that promote healthy living in active communities?



## Current Reality

- Saskatchewan has a higher proportion of obese adults (25.1%) than the national average (20.2%).<sup>1</sup>
- Only 15% of Saskatchewan children meet the minimum of 60 minutes of daily physical activity recommended by current Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines.<sup>2</sup>
- Overweight or obese children and youth are more likely to have a reduced quality of life and are at a greater risk of being teased, bullied and socially isolated.<sup>3</sup>
- Over 60% of Saskatchewan seniors are inactive in their leisure time.<sup>4</sup>

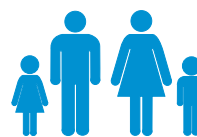


*“Forever...in motion provided the training, resources and expertise so that we could deliver balanced and safe fitness programs for all levels of abilities. I feel many of our seniors would not exercise without this program.”*

– Forever...in motion, Volunteer Leader

*85% of Saskatchewan respondents strongly agreed that “people who are active in recreation are less likely to have health issues.”<sup>7</sup>*

## The Public Says



## Economic Potential

**\$6.8 Billion**

Total healthcare costs of physical inactivity in Canada.<sup>5</sup>



**\$2.6 Billion**

Overall reduction in healthcare spending by 2040 through increased physical activity.<sup>6</sup>



## The Need

Saskatchewan is facing an inactivity and obesity crisis that will have increasing impact on the healthcare system for years to come. Sedentary lifestyles are already burdening the healthcare system in the Province. Thankfully, new and existing recreation programs and initiatives have the potential to improve health outcomes throughout communities in Saskatchewan.

Community-supported recreation programming can lead to increased levels of physical activity among children and older adults. Physical activity programs for youth can keep kids active and healthy, develop leadership skills, reduce crime and build a sense of community in schools.

For older adults, or people with physical limitations and chronic conditions, regular physical activity can lead to an improved quality of life, and can help people become more independent and self-reliant.

## Opportunities for Action

- Continue to provide support for programs aimed at children and youth, as well as older adults, such as Take the Lead!®, HIGH FIVE®, the After-School Time Period and Forever...in motion.
- Expand existing support to programs and initiatives that promote physical literacy for people of all ages and abilities. Physical literacy is recognized as a precondition for lifelong participation in recreation and sport.

## Further Reading

1 Overweight and Obese Adults - Statistics Canada, 2014

2 Active Healthy Kids Report Card, 2009

3 Body Mass Index of Children and Youth, 2012-2013

4 Statistics Canada, 2011

5 Applied Physiology, Nutrition, and Metabolism, 2012, 37(4): 803-806

6 Moving Ahead: The Economic Impact of Reducing Physical Inactivity, 2014

7 Recreation and the Quality of Life in Saskatchewan, 2015

# Priority: Access and Inclusion

How will you ensure that everyone has access to community recreation programs and services that are affordable, equitable and safe?



## Current Reality

- 89% of Canadians feel parks and recreation boost social cohesion and bring our communities closer together.<sup>1</sup>
- Use of Saskatchewan's parks and recreation facilities and services is highest among households with children (64% vs 34%) and First Nation households (72%).<sup>2</sup>
- New citizens are more attracted to activities classified as "active leisure."<sup>3</sup>
- 87% of Canadians feel more connected to their community by watching their kids play or volunteering with the team.<sup>4</sup>
- 69% of newcomers who participate in sport and recreation within their first 3 years of living in Canada believe that it helps them learn about Canadian culture.<sup>5</sup>
- 44% of Saskatchewanians chose where they live to have access to nature.<sup>6</sup>
- Social support networks – including "Community Champions" like Recreation Professionals are the key to supporting active living among the socio-economically disadvantaged.<sup>7</sup>



*"By keeping our children busy, I believe we made them happier with more positive attitudes, as well as less crime and vandalism."  
- Village of Pinehouse, SK*

*Saskatchewan people experiencing disability want more meaningful opportunities to participate in recreation, cultural, sport and leisure activities.<sup>8</sup>*

## The Public Says



## The Need

Saskatchewan's nearly unprecedented population growth in the past decade has caused a massive demographic shift that has influenced how and where people recreate. Additionally, the population of our Province is more diverse than ever before. Some of this diversity is visible, such as variations in sex, gender, age, ability and ethnicity, while other differences are less visible, such as sexual orientation, education, hearing, religious beliefs, socioeconomic status and mental health. This diversity is a cause for celebration, but we recognize that it can also create barriers to participation.

The Province can address the challenges presented by our more diverse population by promoting social cohesion through participation in recreation and parks.

## Opportunities for Action

- Develop and implement strategies and policies, which ensure that no families or individuals in Saskatchewan are denied access to recreation opportunities.
- Address barriers to participation in recreation faced by First Nation and Métis people in Saskatchewan.
- Provide welcoming and safe recreation environments for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.
- Create inclusive opportunities and build leadership capacity for persons living with a disability or special needs to participate.
- Address the unique challenges and capacities in rural and remote communities.



## Further Reading

- 1 Public Perceptions of and Attitudes Towards Community Recreation and Parks, 2011
- 2 Recreation and the Quality of Life in Saskatchewan, 2015
- 3 Playing Together - New Citizens, Sports & Belonging, 2014
- 4 Ibid
- 5 Ibid
- 6 2012 Canadian Nature Survey
- 7 International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity, 2012, 9:42
- 8 People Before Systems: Transforming the Experience of Disability in Saskatchewan, June 2015