

Post-Pandemic Economic Stimulus

Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure

The community sport and recreation sector stands shovel-ready to lead infrastructure projects across rural and urban Canada that will serve as a key pillar of post-pandemic economic recovery

- *Every month that community recreation facilities remain shuttered costs Canadian municipalities a combined \$221M.*
 - *When facilities resume operations, new disease deterrence procedures (hygiene, cleaning, social distancing) could raise Canadian facility operating costs by as much as \$226M annually.*
 - *Pre-COVID, the estimated cost to repair existing community sport and recreation facilities was in the multi-billions. This does not address requirements for new sport and recreation infrastructure for a growing, aging and diversifying population.*
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Community recreation, parks and sport are a fundamental service that is presently facing a significant loss in revenue yet are still incurring many fixed costs as facilities and programs are shuttered due to COVID-19.

Canadians are experiencing a significant loss of the social benefits that cannot be provided while facilities and programs are shuttered. This is particularly true for children, seniors and marginalized Canadians.

Returning these services as fully, safely and quickly as possible in a post-pandemic context must be government priority.

Investing in community sport and recreation infrastructure will not only provide an economic stimulus to communities but also enhance a service for which Canadians have gained an even greater appreciation during the pandemic.

Prior to COVID-19, the capital funding requirements of the parks and recreation sector across Canada were in desperate need of additional investments due to the physical deterioration of existing community sport and recreation infrastructure and the increased but unfulfilled need for new sport and recreation infrastructure to meet a growing, aging and diversifying population.

This reality was re-confirmed in the 2016 *Canadian Infrastructure Report Card (CIRC)*, which estimated replacement costs for sport and recreation facilities in Canada that were in 'very poor' or 'poor' condition to be \$9B. The CIRC also noted that the replacement costs for sport and recreation facilities in Canada that were in 'fair' condition are \$14B. These figures do not include required funding for new sport and recreation infrastructure for the growing, aging and diversifying population.

In response, the federal government created a dedicated envelope with \$1.3B for culture and sport infrastructure. While the dedicate envelope is a good start, the funding commitment is not nearly enough to address the needs and providing the dollars via provincial and territorial governments created major delays.

The 2019 *Canadian Infrastructure Report Card* indicates that over 1/3 of all recreation facilities across Canada are in "fair" condition or worse and that a large proportion of facilities are over 50 years old. It also states that the expected life span of these types of facilities and spaces is between 20-40 years thus rendering many operating beyond their expected life span.

In a post pandemic, scenario additional pressure will be on community sport and recreation infrastructure due to newly imposed or mandated public health requirements (i.e. deep cleaning, hand-washing stations). It is difficult to accurately predict what these changes may be or what cost implications they may create. However, if the combination of operating modifications were to increase costs by a modest 5% for the inventory of facilities, the municipal recreation and non-profit sector would be exposed to an additional \$226M in annual operating costs.

CPRA calls upon the federal government to provide, direct to municipalities, infrastructure funds dedicated to sport and recreation projects to provide economic stimulus relevant to all Canadian communities and to enhance a fundamental social service to Canadians. Alternatively, the same dedicated funding could be provided through the existing Community, Culture and Sport envelope.