



City of  
**Peterborough**

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**To:** **Members of the Arenas Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee**

**From:** **Rob Anderson, Recreation Division Coordinator**

**Meeting Date:** **March 18, 2014**

**Subject:** **Report APRAC14-016  
County Wide Access to Recreation Working Group**

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## **Purpose**

A report to inform of City Staff's participation on a County wide Access to Recreation working group.

## **Recommendation**

That the Arenas Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee approve the recommendation outlined in Report APRAC14-016 dated March 18, 2014, of the Recreation Division Coordinator, as follows:

That Report APRAC14-016 be received for information.

## **Budget and Financial Implications**

There is no budget or financial implication resulting from the approval of the recommendation of Report APRAC14-016.

## Background

In 2013, the Peterborough County City Health Unit (PCCHU) in collaboration with the Community Social Plan Coordinator of the Social Services Division, facilitated meetings that brought together recreation leaders from each of the Townships within Peterborough County. The focus of those meetings was to provide a forum in which municipal staff can discuss ways that the Recreation Leads can collaborate, to increase Access to Recreation at the Township level. In August 2013, the City's Arena Division Manager and the Recreation Division Coordinator were invited to join this working group.

At the August meeting, City Staff were able to provide an update on the Arena Needs Assessment process and gather additional input from the various Townships, which proved to be extremely valuable to the process. At the October meeting, the focus was primarily on financial accessibility to recreation. A presentation was received on the Canadian Tire Jumpstart program, which provides subsidies for children to participate in sport and recreation programs. The YMCA administers Jump Start to County residents, and the City's Recreation division administers Jump Start to City residents. City Staff had opportunity to share information with the Townships about the City's municipal recreation subsidy program.

It is broadly recognized that access to recreation involves far more than just the provision of subsidies. Municipalities should also consider:

- Planning their programs, services and facilities that addresses local needs and issues, in an affordable manner;
- Providing core programs to individuals of all ages and families at low cost or no cost so that financial status does not impact participation;
- Reducing physical barriers in municipal recreation facilities, and providing adaptive equipment for recreational programs where feasible;
- Assisting community partners, whenever possible; and
- Advocate for persons with disabilities in the areas of Policy development and program and service planning.

As such, the working group had engaged the services of David Clark Consulting Inc. to assist in the development of an Access to Recreation Policy Template. The intent is to create a similar policy in each municipality, for each Council's consideration and approval. Updating the City's Recreation policies to specifically address access to recreation would simply formalize what is already occurring. City Staff are currently reviewing their existing policies, and examining the feasibility of a cross-divisional facility booking process.

In February 2014, Selwyn Township submitted an application to the Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund, in partnership with the other seven Townships and the City's Recreation and Social Services Divisions. If successful, the grant will support a project known as Activate Peterborough County and City.

The project has two phases spanning over two years, that will serve to benefit over 134,000 residents from across 4,000 square kilometers. Phase one will lay the foundation for a strong network of information sharing between sport and recreation groups within each of the nine municipalities that make up the County & City of Peterborough. Through a collaborative meeting, involving community groups and municipal government, the needs of these groups will be determined.

Phase two will be the "Activating" portion of the strategy in which the opportunities identified in the assessment stage will be acted on with the purpose of building capacity within each participating municipality. Capacity building activities will include Fundamental Movement Skills training, HIGHFive® training, NCCP Coaching certification, and volunteer development training. There will also be information sessions about Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) regarding physical literacy, Canadian Tire Jumpstart, and other related subsidy programs. By providing these training sessions, community groups will be able to develop their programs and services to be a sustainable and integral part of their community, in turn building a strong foundation for lifelong healthy, active residents.

This project seeks to address the struggles that the recreation sector is currently experiencing in rural areas and small urban centres in Ontario. Declining enrolment and lack of qualified volunteers is hampering recreation and sport in our community. We want to increase the number of trained and qualified sport and recreation leaders, as well as increase their skill and knowledge with respect to physical literacy and the fundamental movement skills. By doing this, we hope to strengthen sport and recreation programming in our community and thereby increase participation and overall access to recreation.

## Summary

Through the efforts of the PCCHU and the Community Social Plan, the recreation leaders from each Township in the County and from the City of Peterborough have come together to work collaboratively with the goal of increasing access to recreation for their residents.

Submitted by,

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