



MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF SHELburne **Policy Statement**

AFFORDABLE ACCESS TO RECREATION POLICY

1. POLICY VISION STATEMENT

The Municipality of the District of Shelburne recognizes the many benefits of participating in recreation opportunities and promotes the full participation of all District of Shelburne residents in recreation programs, services and facilities, regardless of financial circumstances. Programs, services and facilities will be planned, delivered and evaluated to ensure they are affordable, inclusive and responsive to needs and interests.

Everyone is engaged in meaningful, accessible recreation experiences that foster:

1.1 Individual Wellbeing: Individuals will have optimal mental and physical wellbeing and be engaged and contributing members of their families and communities.

1.2 Community Wellbeing: Communities are healthy, inclusive, welcoming, resilient and sustainable

1.3 Wellbeing of Places and Spaces: Natural and built environments are appreciated, nurtured and sustained. e.g. Stewardship of Beaches

2. RATIONALE

2.1 Recreation is a fundamental human need in all ages and stages of life. People participate in recreational activities for fun, enjoyment, fitness, health, social interaction, creative expression, a desire to connect with nature, relaxation and to enhance their quality of life. Investments in the development of people through recreation are essential to creating healthy individuals and communities.

2.2 The MBM (Market Basket Measure) is a measure of the disposable income a family would need to purchase goods to cover basic needs - food, clothing, shelter, transportation, etc. MBM rates for our local municipal census subdivisions are not available, however, with nearly 45% of household incomes less than \$40,000, following MBM Guidelines would suggest that many Shelburne County families are potentially in strained circumstances and have difficulty meeting their basic needs. Many residents depend on seasonal employment and jobs at minimum wage. Across Canada there is an increase in precarious employment, ie, a shift from full time permanent jobs to more temporary or part time jobs with irregular hours, low wages or few if any benefits. Income levels of Shelburne County residents are lower than the average incomes across the province.

2.3 Low income residents, individuals and families, experience barriers to participation that include lack of awareness or information about local opportunities for recreation, physical activity and sport. Additional barriers include: literacy, mental health restrictions, registration fees, transportation, cost of equipment; clothing eg uniforms.

2.4 Documented research from the health, crime prevention, sport/recreation and social services sectors indicates that recreation participation enables the following:

- Develop skills and competencies;
- Be exposed to program leaders and positive adult role models;
- Achieve better physical and mental health;
- Develop psychosocial skills;
- Improve self-esteem, academic performance, peer and family relationships;
- Acquire pro-social values and develop life skills such as leadership, decision-making and problem solving;
- Form healthy habits that can be transferred into their adult lives;
- Participate, volunteer and take pride in their community; and
- Have fun and be with friends.

2.5 Research has shown that an investment in a preventative health model that includes recreation has significant economic returns. It is better to be proactive than have to be reactive

2.6 Nova Scotia Priority 2.1 of the Shared Strategy for Advancing Recreation in Nova Scotia states that constraints to participation in recreation experiences for all children and youth are eliminated.

3. SCOPE

This policy details the means used to ensure that the recreation and parks programs, services, and facilities delivered by the Municipality of the District of Shelburne Recreation & Parks Department are affordable for participants.

4. POLICY OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 Increase the number of FREE community recreation opportunities thus reducing the financial barrier to participation.
- 4.2 Increase inclusion and access to recreation for populations that face constraints to participation, ie implement targeted outreach.
- 4.3 Increase participation of families and individuals in recreation programs by promoting the benefits of recreation for physical and mental health, social inclusion, and constructive use of leisure time.

5. POLICY ACTIONS:

Note: Some of these actions are already in practice and some are for future consideration.

- 5.1 Provide reduced rates for families with 3 or more children.
- 5.2 Provide access to funding support for recreation sport, and cultural opportunities for children and youth ages 4 – 18 in Shelburne County by administering the Kids Fair Play FUND
- 5.3 Coordinate access to funding support from N.S. Kidsport

- 5.4 Coordinate access to funding support from Canadian Tire Jumpstart through the co-branded Kids ‘ Fair Play FUNd and Canadian Tire Jumpstart to provide funding support for children and youth in Shelburne County for registration, equipment, and transportation
- 5.5 Kids Fair Play FUNd will partner with Canadian Tire Jumpstart to provide community programs at low or no cost
- 5.6 Coordinate and provide funding for the Free of Cost Ice Time Program at the Shelburne County Arena
- 5.7 Provide reduced fee or no fee programs.
- 5.8 Provide low cost programs through Community Use at SRHS eg \$2 Drop In sports programs and the Fitness Center; First Time Free “Try It” philosophy; rental fees are charged on a cost recovery basis
- 5.9 Promote use of Municipal Facilities: Welkum Park; Seven District Interpretive Sites; Tom Tigney Trail; Jordan River Trail; Roseway River Trail; Footbridge Trail; Albert Acker Memorial Field.
- 5.10 Facilitate access to recreation equipment (loan or rental).
- 5.11 Recruit and encourage parents to volunteer to be involved in the organization and delivery of their children’s recreation activities thus keeping the registration fees low. eg Active Start Soccer; Active Start Basketball, etc. As an incentive to volunteer registration fees will be waived for families that have a member volunteer to assist with the organizing or delivery of a program.
- 5.12 Coordinate a sport, recreation, and cultural equipment exchange program.
- 5.13 Encourage partnerships with community recreation providers that encourage and ensure “Recreation for All” in cooperation with agencies that support low-income families in Shelburne County. Eg share skilled, trained leadership and other resources
- 5.14 Promote and encourage free outdoor unstructured play, as this is available to all at no cost.
- 5.15 Include questions on community surveys and program evaluations about affordability and access.
- 5.16 Compile a list of low or no cost recreation opportunities available to Municipality of Shelburne residents and share the list to promote the opportunities and benefits to target populations.
- 5.17 Include a budgeted commitment for targeted outreach programs and needs.
- 5.18 Offer multigenerational programming to increase or share the ability to pay.
- 5.19 Explore the need to set up a sustainable Recreation for ALL FUNd to include financially disadvantaged adults.
- 5.20 Explore providing more FREE opportunities for children and youth targeting swimming, biking, and skating activities.
- 5.21 Explore assigning family recreation funds annually for Municipality of Shelburne programs, services and facilities using an application process with approvals based on income levels. An example of this type of program currently operating in the greater Toronto area is called “Welcome Funds”.
- 5.22 Provide Leisure Education professional development for Recreation Staff

5.23 Recreation Staff will develop and deliver a Leisure Education program that will raise the awareness of the value of recreation and leisure for individuals of all ages and families as well as the opportunities that are or could be available to them.

6. ACCOUNTABILITY

The Director of Recreation and Parks is responsible for reviewing and reporting annually on the progress of the implementation of the Policy.

7. DEFINITIONS

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

Recreation experiences include participation in physical activity and sport, and in artistic, cultural, social and intellectual activities. Spiritual wellbeing may be enhanced through connecting with nature, helping others through volunteering, engaging in artistic expression and other forms of recreational experiences. Recreational activities can be structured and unstructured. Many are done with other people while others are done alone.

7.2 Recreation program – Activities of a recreation, sport, art, or cultural nature that may be self-directed or instructional, providing skill development in a particular leisure pursuit.

7.3 Targeted Outreach Programs – Refers to specialized programs designed for a specific audience and/or geographic community in order to help engage residents or as a component of a broader community initiative eg After the Bell for Girls grades 7 - 12; Isolated Seniors; Recreation 4 Mental Health Programs; Kids Fair Play FUNd, etc

7.4 User Fees – A sum of money paid by the individual who chooses to access a service or facility. The individual pays directly for something they want and receive what they have paid for.

Clerk's Annotation For Official Policy Book

Date of Notice to Council members of Intent to Consider
(7 days minimum): December 14, 2015

Date of Passage of Policy: December 21, 2015

Municipal Clerk

Date