

Saint John Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan



What is PlaySJ?

PlaySJ is the process to create a new *Parks and Recreation Strategic* Plan for Saint John.

The Strategic Plan will guide the City's decisions for investment, maintenance and development of recreation facilities and programs over the next 10 to 15 years.



Why do we need a Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan?

The current Recreation Master plan is nearly 20 years old. The proposed Municipal Plan recommended that the City develop this Strategic Plan to make sure that our recreation investment and maintenance is in line with the community's expectations and how Saint John will grow and change over the next 25 years. Through PlanSJ, the process to create the proposed Municipal Plan, Saint Johners told us that they want better quality parks and green spaces and accessible and affordable programs and recreation opportunities.

The City is committed to improving the quality of life in our community with recreation facilities and programs that are of high value to our residents. **To do this, we need you to tell us your recreation priorities so that we can develop a Strategic Plan that meets your needs.** Please keep in mind that our City, like many others, faces challenges in planning and maintaining recreation services:

- * Aging facilities that require costly maintenance and/or replacement
 - * Slow population growth
 - * An aging population
 - * Fewer children
 - * Limited City budget
 - * Changing recreation needs, activities and expectations.
- An oversupply of some facilities (and an undersupply of others)

Please get involved in PlaySJ and tell us what recreation facilities and programs are important to you and your family by:

Reading this material and answering the attached questionnaire;
Attending the Open House on November 30th at the Lily Lake Pavilion from 4:30-8:00pm;
Sending your comments and ideas to elizabeth.deluisa@exp.com, brianl.white@exp.com
or 646-8020.

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Our Supply of Recreation Facilities

In 2010, the City reviewed all of our recreation facilities against a population-based standard to determine whether we had the number of facilities that we should. Based on our population of 68,000 people, this review showed that we have an oversupply of some facilities and an undersupply of others. For example:

Saint John has 71 playgrounds, but we should only have 14 for our population.

Saint John has 6 arenas, but we should only have 3 for our population.

Saint John has 30 tennis courts, but we should only have 14 for our population.

Saint John has 16 community centres, and we should have 14 for our population.

Despite an oversupply of many kinds of facilities, you told us through PlanSJ and a 2009 Citizen Satisfaction Survey that you want better quality recreation facilities and programs. When it comes to recreation facilities in Saint John, quantity doesn't always mean quality.

Our Recreation Programs

The City directly provides recreation programs at some community centres in the City, and partners with other community groups (like the Boys and Girls Club and the YMCA) to provide programs at other community centres. This means that different programs and levels of service are offered at each community centre.

The City also partners with and provides funding to other community groups to provide before and after school programs, outdoor education, swimming lessons and many other recreation activities.



Contact elizabeth.deluisa@exp.com or brianl.white@exp.com
phone 646-8020.

The Budget Reality

Our recreation facilities are getting older and more expensive to maintain. As well, many of these facilities were built in anticipation of a larger population and it's hard to sustain them on our current tax base. Changing recreation trends and an aging population are changing the kinds of recreation that people want.

We cannot afford to provide high quality service for the number of facilities and programs that we currently have. The reality is that we need to identify what recreation facilities and programs are most important to Saint Johners and focus our budget on those.

Please get involved in PlaySJ and help us determine a Strategic Plan that will meet our community's recreation needs with the right number and kind of facilities in the right locations, and programs that are delivered in the most effective way.



For more information or to submit your comments please contact:

Brian White at brianl.white@exp.com or 646-8020
Elizabeth DeLuisa at elizabeth.deluisa@exp.com or 646-8020

After we hear from the community and stakeholders at our November events, we will draft recommendations for the *Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan* and bring it back for your review early in 2012.