



COUNCIL REPORT

Meeting Date: Mike Myatt, Vice Deputy Mayor

Subject: Request to Governments of Canada and Province of Ontario to open the application process for the Bi-lateral "Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program" that was signed on March 14th, 2017

Background

The Town of Saugeen Shores, a community population of approximately 14,000 and growing, is faced with a problem that many Ontario Municipalities are experiencing. Many of our recreation and cultural facilities were built in the 1970's and 1980's and now require modern upgrades or replacement. Our pool is over 40 years old and needs to be replaced; our 100 year old Town Hall is in need of repairs; our ball diamonds are aging and our Southampton Ice Facility requires significant repairs. For a community our size, these facilities represent community hubs; they represent gathering places and facilities where members of our community can exercise their mind and bodies on route to living healthier lives. Our residents want to be active, some are active now, but our aging facilities are becoming a deterrent for those who wish to live active lifestyles. In most cases, the Town of Saugeen Shores is able to fundraise and borrow for 1/3 of the cost to make these facility replacements become a reality, but we need bi-lateral funding between the Federal Government and Provincial Government to allow for capital funding allocations to support these facility upgrades or in some cases to support total replacement.

Like other essential municipal infrastructure, Recreation and Cultural Infrastructure is in need of investment. A 2007 study by Parks and Recreation Ontario revealed that over \$5 billion in deferred capital investment is required to repair or replace existing recreation facilities in Ontario – that number is now \$6 billion. The same study showed that 50% of municipally-owned Recreation Infrastructure is at or near the end of its expected lifespan. Additionally, all community recreation facilities that are in mid-life cycle require renovation or upgrades, consistent with their age. Many community facilities built before 1990 require retrofit investments to protect customer safety, improve energy efficiency or enhance services particularly from an accessibility standpoint.

Nationally, the Canadian Recreation and Parks Association (CPRA), an alliance of all 13 provincial and territorial recreation and park associations, has continued to research this issue. CPRA participated on the Advisory Board for the 2016 Canadian Infrastructure Report Card 5. This Report Card includes data on municipal recreation facilities and the results show that almost 1 in 2 recreation facilities are in 'very poor', 'poor' or 'fair' condition and need repair or replacement. In comparison to other municipal infrastructure assessed in the Report Card, recreation facilities were in the worst state and require immediate attention. Furthermore, new facilities are required to meet future needs linked to rapid population growth being experienced by the Town of Saugeen Shores.

Through budget 2016, the Federal Government allocated \$14.4 billion in new funding for the repair and modernization of key Infrastructure. This funding via the Investing in Canada Plan has gone towards vital public transit systems, clean water and wastewater systems, and Social Infrastructure such as affordable housing. These are all very important needs for many communities in Ontario, but the Town of Saugeen Shores would like to suggest that replacement of aging recreation facilities is also a high priority for Municipalities.

Building on the first phase of the Investing in Canada Plan, \$81.2 billion in additional funding was made available in the Federal 2017 budget to support five priority areas over the next decade: Public Transit, Green, Social, Trade and Transportation, and Rural and Northern Communities' Infrastructure and provides predictable funding and focusses on large-scale transformational projects.

The Governments of Canada and Province of Ontario have an infrastructure agreement that was signed March 14th, 2017, and this bi-lateral agreement now includes a new stream named "Community, Culture, and Recreation". The Town of Saugeen Shores needs to request this program be opened in the short term to allow our community and other communities around the Province to submit applications. It is this next phase that Saugeen Shores Council needs to start lobbying our MP and MPP for Provincial and Federal support to help make this happen.

The attached Motion is being proposed for Council consideration and pending approval, it is being recommended that the Town of Saugeen Shores encourages all Municipalities in the Province of Ontario to pass a similar motion and forward to the Governments of Canada and Province of Ontario to stress the importance of opening the application process for Recreation and Culture Infrastructure funding under the "Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program".

Respectfully Submitted
Mike Myatt, Vice Deputy Mayor