

Recreation



Photo Credit: Avon recreation centre , Colorado

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Recreational in general means anything people do to relax, exercise or have fun, whether outside or indoors. Recreation has been redefined as an experience (participation in physical activity and sport, and in artistic, cultural, social and intellectual activities) that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that increase individual and community wellbeing³.

Vision for Recreation in Canada

Canadian Parks and Recreation Association visualize a city in which everyone is engaged in meaningful, accessible recreation experiences that adapt³-

- Individual wellbeing
- Community wellbeing
- The wellbeing of our natural and built environments

**Emphasizing
on the needs of
older people in
development of
recreation facilities
and programs
is an important
consideration**

Recreation planning is increasingly necessary in our rapidly changing society as we deal with complex social issues such as rising health care, cultural diversity, crime and vandalism, dysfunctional families, environmental protection and future economic sustainability. Recreational activities are a perfect way to unwind and feel positive. Research has shown that recreational activities have a major positive influence on personal health and community wellbeing³.

Recreational Facilities

Recreation facilities are the physical assets such as sports facilities, playgrounds, libraries, parks, trails, waterfront etc. which accommodate recreation activities². The facilities can be natural or built assets which are specifically provided and managed for recreational purposes or they may be assets which fulfil some other primary role, and which are occasionally used for recreation such as Waterfront of Selkirk, Manitoba (Fig-1).

• Fala Park (sports & recreation centre)-Wolsztyn, Poland

Fala Park is a sports & recreation center situated in the small town of Wolsztyn, Poland famous as the location of a locomotive roundhouse². It has been built on a former brownfield site bordering an historic park and offering views to a nearby lake.



Photo Credit: Selkirk.ca

Figure 1: Selkirk Waterfront
(natural asset for recreation)



Figure 2: Fala Park (sports & recreation centre) - Wolsztyn, Poland



Figure 3: Sacramento River National Recreation trail

The planning consideration of Fala Park (Fig-2) that stands out are aesthetically strong visual connections created between the building and surroundings. It invites maximum natural light and the facade facing the lake seeks to strengthen the connections between the town, the park and the lake. A rooftop tennis court makes it more admirable as you witness panorama of the town's historic church towers and dense rooftops.

- **Sacramento River National Recreation Trail-Redding, California**

The Sacramento River Trail (Fig-3), which crosses the world famous Sundial Bridge in the heart of Redding and passes alongside a historic abandoned railway is popular with locals and visitors alike who want to take a casual stroll, a beautiful bike ride⁸. The scenery along the trail make it a convenient and pleasant way to get some fresh air while enjoying Redding's famous river. **The trail is a perfect way for people connect to nature through recreation.**

- **Hyde Park Senior Playgrounds**

Senior Playgrounds are becoming a worldwide trend especially in Europe. In 2008, The Royal Parks was approached by the Knightsbridge Association to provide an Older People's Play Area in Hyde Park, funded by Westminster City Council's neighbourhood budget scheme⁷. They came up with a beautiful and peaceful Senior' playground facility in Hyde Park (Fig-4). The facility contains six pieces of exercise equipment to help seniors be physically active. Equipments have been selected after conducting an extensive feasibility analysis to ensure that a high level of accessibility, ease of use and enjoyment can be ensured for seniors¹. Similar projects have been successfully installed at Dam Head Park (Manchester), Heathfield Recreation Ground (Whitton) and Hampton Common (Richmond)¹. The concept of senior playgrounds is relevant in Canada as we have higher percentage of seniors. **Senior playgrounds would not only provide a place for seniors to enjoy physical activity, they also offer an opportunity for socializing.**

"We don't stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing"- George Bernard Shaw⁴



Figure 4: Senior's playground Hyde Park, London

Recreational Programs

Recreation programs are the initiatives by governments or private bodies that

Figure 5: Old people play
area-Manchester, UK



people take part in to gain the leisure benefits they are seeking². Both provincial and federal governments along planners and architects are involved in making plans for recreation in Canada. At provincial level we have Manitoba's Policy for Recreation Opportunities with its objective to build strong communities through recreational activities.

- **Manitoba's Policy for Recreation Opportunities**

The government of Manitoba created Manitoba's Policy for Recreation Opportunities in 2015 . It recognises recreation for its positive contribution in community building⁷. As per the policy all citizens have the right to benefit from Manitoba's recreation opportunities. This policy encourages and ensures that recreation planning is an important part of city development. It provides an inclusive approach for people of all age-groups to engage in activities and help develop policies that protect our environment while increasing opportunities.

At city level, the Winnipeg Recreation and Parks Strategies, currently in development phase, will provide a 25-year framework to help guide recreation and parks programs, services, policies, standards and procedures, and future investment in existing and new infrastructure



Figure 6: Manitoba's Policy for
Recreation Opportunities

Final Thoughts

In conclusion, we can identify the and modify existing facilities such as redeveloping a former playground in an area with an ageing population into a community garden with quiet seating or senior's playground. It is cost efficient way of engaging our people in recreational activities.

A stable, knowledgeable leadership base is essential for successful recreation programs. To support recreation in Manitoba, communities and non-profit organizations can get involved in how existing programs may be upgraded and modernised, or replaced by new programs with age-friendliness as a key value.

Sources:

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