

## **Town of Sackville Recreation Master Plan (2019-2024)**

In undertaking this project to formulate recommendations for the 2019-2024 recreation master plan update, Town of Sackville staff:

- Facilitated two focus group sessions, one with youth (15 participants) from Tantramar Regional High School and one with representations from local minor sports associations (11 sports participated).
- Facilitated one public input session with 12 participants.
- Conducted three online surveys for the following demographics: Mount Allison University Students (37 respondents), Middle School/High School (219 respondents), and a general citizen's survey (137 respondents).

## **Community Perceptions of Current Recreation Delivery System**

As outlined in Section 1, community members were engaged through 3 online questionnaires: Mount Allison Student focused, youth focused, and general resident focused. Additionally, two focus groups were held, one with high school youth and one with the various minor sport associations in Town. Finally, a public consultation meeting was held, and patrons of the Sackville Farmer's Market were engaged throughout the summer of 2018.

Overall, 97% of those asked felt that recreation programs, parks and services were important to the quality of life in Sackville. 45% of residents felt that the existing structure met their needs, while only 32% felt their needs were not entirely met. Youth number were more favourable, where 67% felt that the current structure met their needs.

By far, most residents use Town parks and programs for either social or physical fitness reasons. They felt that the condition of Town parks is either excellent or good and well programmed, but there needed to be more done to connect Town parks through trails and active transportation routes. Most of the other recreation facilities in town are well received, including the Tantramar Veteran's Memorial Civic Centre, the Bill Johnstone Memorial Activity Centre, sidewalks and most Mount Allison facilities. Residents felt the Salem and Marshview school gymnasiums, especially the Marshview Middle School Gymnasium, biking safety, and the Mount Allison Pool required the most attention.

Residents felt that a community space that includes an indoor walking track and a dedicated youth and art space should be an infrastructure priority in the coming years. An off-leash dog park was also mentioned on several occasions, along with adding more trails, both for connectivity purposes and to take advantage of some of the Town's outdoor opportunities such as the Quarry and the dyke system.

50% of residents felt that the quality of programs being offered were either excellent or good, with only 5% not satisfied. Evening programming for adults, art for children, youth and adults, and more intergenerational programming were both common suggestions. The youth participants showed a strong interest in rugby and badminton programs either during the summer months or during the afterschool period.

66% of residents who have registered from programs in the past have done so online while 31% have registered in person. Interestingly, 8% did not know how to register for a recreational program. That number is worst for youth where 13% of respondents had not heard of programming opportunities in Town. By far, the most well known and highly rated special event offered by the Town was Fall Fair. The BHP Challenge and Operation Beautification seemed to be the two events that were the least well known, both of which have been established within the past four years. Most residents rated all of the Town events as excellent or good and only New Brunswick Day and Winterfest events looked like they may need some improvement.

There were several event suggestions that the Town may be interested in exploring, including dances/concerts, Environmental Week activities, bringing back the Street Chalk Festival and a Diversity Festival. There were also a significant number of residents who felt there are enough events in Town and adding more is not necessary.