



PARKS AND RECREATION ONTARIO

**2022
PARKS AND
RECREATION
ONTARIO**

**ANNUAL
REPORT**



Message from the Board Chair and CEO

Countless times over the last two and a half years, Parks and Recreation Ontario (PRO) has told the story of how our sector navigated the pandemic. We have marvelled at the strength and resilience of parks and recreation professionals in the face of unprecedented challenges and championed the way in which our sector has consistently advocated for resources to better serve Ontarians. We have told this story so often that it is now just a part of our daily parlance, so obvious that it feels like it doesn't need to be said. But while the pandemic made Ontarians see, for the first time, how important this sector is to well-being, it is our job to uphold this true and simple fact: parks and recreation is vital to personal and community health.



In 2022, the sector emerged, ready to support Ontarians as they returned to recreation. And in turn, PRO ensured that it was ready to support the sector. Our continued focus on supporting the needs of our members was demonstrated across the organization through new training and professional development opportunities, ongoing advocacy, and member resources.

As we look to the future, we are seeing demographic, environmental, technological, and legislative trends that will change not only the needs of our communities but also how we meet them. Despite this, our commitment to you, our members, is an unwavering belief in your work and the power of parks and recreation. Together, we can create an Ontario where everyone has equitable access to high quality parks and recreation.

In play,

Shari Lichterman
Board Chair

Jan Wilson
Interim CEO



Positioning Parks and Recreation

The catalyst for coordinated advocacy in the sector.

In 2022, Ontario's legislative landscape shifted from one centred on iterative changes to the Reopening Ontario Act, 2020, to a clear focus on returning to a "new normal." The frequency of legislative activity affecting the parks and recreation sector decreased as the provincial government turned its attention towards the election and other sectors.

Rowan's Law

The tragic death of 17 year old Rowan Stringer led to Rowan's Law, legislation intended to make amateur sport safer and raise awareness about concussions in sport. PRO provided input on field of play regulations using data collected from members and stakeholders to ensure that these requirements will not be onerous for community recreation providers.

Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care

As the provincial and federal governments came to an agreement on the implementation of CWELCC, PRO contributed to briefings at both levels of government to advocate for the vital role that recreation plays in Ontario's continuum of childcare.

Bill 23, The More Homes Built Faster Act

In November 2022, the Ontario government passed the More Homes Built Faster Act, an omnibus bill that made amendments to several pieces of legislation. Most notably, the Bill removes key oversight provisions and fee structures that support the municipal provision of park spaces and recreation services. PRO moved quickly to provide briefs and submissions on the Bill and several specific regulations. In addition, PRO developed a toolkit to support community-level advocacy on the importance of parks and recreation and forged intersectoral partnerships to develop shared messaging across the province.

Policy Resources

Taking an evidence-based approach to policy development, PRO continued its research program, publishing statistics gathered from a 2021 values survey on parks and recreation and conducting research on staff shortages in the camps and aquatics sector. These pieces will support PRO members as they advocate for resources in their own communities. In addition, PRO developed a municipal orientation toolkit for newly elected council members as an informative introduction to community recreation and parks.



Youth Employment Programs

The funding provided a great opportunity because it was focused on hiring youth who might otherwise face barriers to employment. The (Youth Employment Experience) program allowed us to bring an entirely different perspective to the hiring process.

Michelle Powers, Recreation and Programming Coordinator, Town of Ingersoll

In 2022, PRO continued its work as the regional manager of the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association's (CPRA) Green Jobs Initiative and Youth Employment Experience for Ontario and Manitoba.

In April 2022, after five years in operation, the Green Jobs Initiative wrapped its program after providing millions of dollars in wage subsidies to communities across the country.

2022 was also the first full year of operation for the Youth Employment Experience, a grant that provides job placements for vulnerable youth, allowing them to connect with a mentor, and gain hands-on experience in a workplace setting.



Numbers at a Glance



More than 80 communities and organizations served



Over 100 youth receiving positive workplace experience in the sector



\$600,000 in funding disbursed



Knowledge Mobilization

Advancing innovation to strengthen practice.

In the wake of labour shortages and unprecedented levels of turnover, knowledge mobilization became critical for developing staff. Over the course of the year, over six hundred parks and recreation professionals attended PRO's education and training events and many more accessed resources developed to build capacity in the sector. PRO also hosted four working groups where members could connect, share best practices, and learn from one another.



Professional Development

The 2022 PRO Educational Forum was hosted virtually in March, boasting new interactive elements, an engaging keynote, networking opportunities, and PRO's first policy hackathon on addressing recruitment and retention issues in the sector. The Parks and Recreation Management Certificate (PRMC) program, presented in partnership with the Schulich Executive Education Centre was created to build capacity in the sector and provide future leaders with the skills required to advance their careers. In 2022, there were 52 graduates from the program.

Member Resources

PRO offers members webinars and materials on key issues and legislative changes. In 2022, our focus was on equity and access. We partnered with knowledge experts in inclusion, for a facilitated discussion and micro learnings on inclusive recreation and a webinar on using American Sign Language in recreation settings. In addition, PRO developed three materials: a land acknowledgment resource that provided an introduction to truth and reconciliation and a framework for developing a land acknowledgment, a municipal council orientation toolkit for communities looking to brief new council members on parks and recreation, and an advocacy toolkit on Bill 23, the More Homes Built Faster Act. PRO also held an information session on Yardstick, a tool to help communities benchmark their parks operations and open spaces.



45 speakers delivering
subject area expertise



6 member exclusive
resources



180 working group
members



Quality Assurance

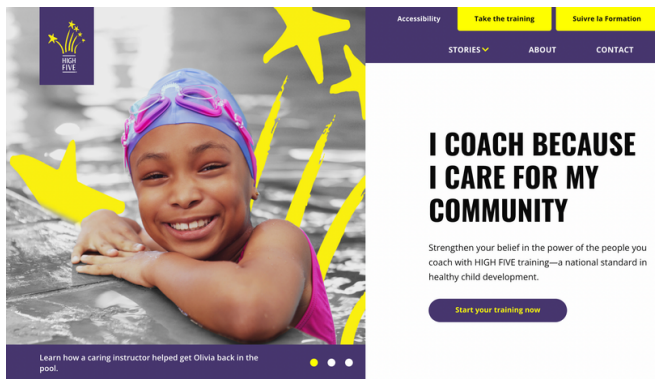
Elevate the sector through quality assurance.

As Canada’s quality standard for children’s recreation, HIGH FIVE® continues to reach communities across the country to ensure high quality programming that helps ignite a life long love of recreation. Over the years, HIGH FIVE® has demonstrated a commitment to continual improvement. This was no different in 2022 with new training opportunities, and a digital revitalization set to transform how HIGH FIVE® is offered.

- ★ 38 accredited and 363 HIGH FIVE® registered organizations
- ★ 13,197 participants trained in HIGH FIVE®
- ★ 425 HIGH FIVE® trainers

Sector Development

Responding to a need for development opportunities for HIGH FIVE® trainers, PRO developed an annual continuing education program. This year's training was an introduction to truth and reconciliation in a recreation context. 2022 also marked the end of a three year grant on gender equality in sport that PRO partnered on with the CPRA. As a part of this grant, PRO refreshed



the HIGH FIVE® Sport training, developing four new modules on barriers to participation for girls and women at all stages of life. In the first part of the year, PRO ran a national marketing campaign to raise awareness for the new modules and offered complimentary access to professional and volunteer coaches. In total, 4500 trainings were accessed by members of the sector.

Digital Transformation

In 2022, PRO began the process of planning a digital transformation for the HIGH FIVE® standard. This included securing a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to create a new learning management system that would allow participants to access virtual trainings at the point of payment. This sets the stage for a revamp of the HIGH FIVE® database to make it more accessible and easier to use.



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Treasurer's Report

Throughout a tumultuous 2022, the Parks and Recreation sector demonstrated its fortitude and resilience and continued to expand its services and public spaces. PRO was proud to be at the forefront of this rapidly changing landscape, partnering alongside our stakeholders and our community. We continued to listen and we provided a broad range of programming, training, and education, and we worked together leading advocacy with government and others. We contained costs and invested in key priorities including technology, and our HIGH FIVE® programs, and we stabilized our foundation so that we are well positioned for success and expansion into 2023 and beyond.



PRO completed 2022 with an operating surplus of over \$412,000. PRO's strong reserves and cash balance, derived from a history of prudent management, will allow for carefully planned rebuilding to further enhance our work. Our plan to position our organization to continue to lead with the parks and recreation sector through this next chapter in our history is well received. Our investments continue with new technology platforms to better support our membership and to revitalize our operations. Enhancements of our training portfolio with more engagement and in person opportunities, aimed to connect the leaders of today and tomorrow, will continue to be a flagship of our organization to meet our commitment to ensuring access of Ontarians to high quality parks and recreation.



Summary Financial Information

Statement of Operations For the year ended December 31, 2022

Revenue	
HIGH FIVE®	1,270,110
Membership services	509,745
Education and training	190,589
Corporate services	106,450
Contract services and grants	75,466
Government subsidies	35,434
	<u>2,187,794</u>

Expenditures	
Corporate services	1,274,053
HIGH FIVE®	274,147
Education and training	81,474
Contract services	75,466
Communications and public relations	60,781
Membership services	9,013
	<u>1,774,934</u>
Excess of revenue over expenditures	<u>412,860</u>

Statement of Financial Position As at December 31, 2022

Assets	
Cash and cash equivalents	1,212,416
Accounts receivable	69,019
Inventory	10,724
Prepaid expenses and sundry assets	32,872
Deposits	12,643
Capital assets	18,910
	<u>1,356,584</u>

Liabilities and Net Assets	
Liabilities	
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	124,070
Government remittances payable	27,787
Deferred contributions	106,863
	<u>258,720</u>
Net Assets	<u>1,097,864</u>
	<u>1,356,584</u>

*Audited financial statements are available.





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