
Date: June 23, 2026

To: Viktoriya Mykhaylychenko, Senior Associate, Partnerships, Building Ontario Fund

Subject: Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Financing: Sector Perspectives and Key Considerations

Dear Ms. Mykhaylychenko,

On behalf of Parks and Recreation Ontario (PRO), Ontario Recreation Facilities Association (ORFA) and Ontario Nonprofit Network (ONN), thank you for engaging municipalities, sector organizations, and stakeholders through the recent market sounding exercise on sport and recreation infrastructure in Ontario.

We welcome the opportunity to provide feedback on innovative financing approaches to address growing infrastructure needs across the province. Collectively representing municipalities, recreation providers, facility operators, and nonprofit organizations, we share a commitment to ensuring high-quality sport and recreation infrastructure remains sustainable, affordable, accessible, and responsive to the needs of Ontario communities.

As Building Ontario Fund (BOF) considers future involvement in sport and recreation infrastructure financing, we offer the following key considerations:

Sport and Recreation Facilities are Vital Infrastructure

Sport and recreation facilities are far more than physical assets. They are essential public infrastructure that support community health, social connectedness, youth development, economic activity, emergency preparedness, and quality of life. Their value is realized through community outcomes and public benefit. Financing frameworks should recognize that sport and recreation infrastructure serves a public purpose and should therefore prioritize affordability, accessibility, and community impact alongside financial sustainability.

Sector Expertise Must Inform Future Planning

Future sport and recreation infrastructure strategies will be strongest when informed by the expertise of those who plan, own, operate, and maintain these facilities every day. While developers and private-sector partners may have a role to play in certain projects, municipalities, facility operators, recreation professionals, nonprofit organizations, and community stakeholders possess critical operational knowledge and sector expertise that should remain central to future policy and financing discussions.

Financing Models Must Reflect the Realities of Ontario Communities

BOF financing models should reflect the realities of sport and recreation infrastructure projects across Ontario. Current BOF eligibility criteria, including minimum investment thresholds, external capital requirements, and revenue-generation expectations, may limit access for most sport and recreation infrastructure projects and disproportionately exclude

small, rural, northern, and mid-sized communities. Greater flexibility is needed, recognizing that investment needs extend beyond new sport and recreation infrastructure to include the retrofit, modernization, expansion, and renewal of aging assets. For many communities, these projects represent the most pressing, cost-effective, and sustainable infrastructure investments. Additionally, while regional financing and bundled asset models warrant further exploration, implementation must account for local governance structures, priorities, and decision-making realities.

Investment Should Strengthen Community-Based Sport and Recreation

Municipalities and nonprofit organizations have a proven track record of delivering affordable, inclusive, and community-focused recreation services. As BOF evaluates future financing opportunities, priority should be given to projects led by municipalities, Indigenous communities and nonprofit organizations, ensuring public investments support facilities and programs that are designed to maximize community benefit, accessibility, and long-term public value. Public financing should strengthen the organizations that have historically owned, operated, and maintained recreation infrastructure to serve Ontario residents.

Ontario's sport and recreation infrastructure is facing growing pressures from aging assets, population growth, evolving community needs, and affordability challenges. While we welcome innovative financing solutions, any future framework must recognize sport and recreation infrastructure as a public good that remains affordable, accessible, and available to all Ontarians.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide input and welcome continued dialogue with Building Ontario Fund as this work advances.

Sincerely,



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