



December 16, 2009

**TO THE ATTENTION OF: Mayors, Municipal Councils and Recreation Directors**

**FROM: Larry Ketcheson, CEO, Parks and Recreation Ontario**

---

Parks and Recreation Ontario is very pleased to have been closely involved with the development of the Affordable Access to Recreation Policy Framework. Parks and Recreation Ontario is the secretariat for the Ontario Task Group on Affordable Access to Recreation and we are very proud of the work that the Task Group has completed over the past two years, culminating in this important policy document.

Parks and Recreation Ontario has also completed two other projects that support the Policy Framework: the 2009 report on the *Use and Benefits of Local Government Recreation and Parks Services* and the *Charter for Recreation and Parks in Ontario*. Both of these are also enclosed in this package.

The *Use and Benefits* report summarizes the results of a survey of Ontario residents that explores people's attitudes toward parks and recreation services in their community. This study provides valuable information for everyone working or volunteering in parks and recreation. For example:

- 98% of Ontarians agree that recreation and parks are essential to community vitality;
- 93% agree that recreation participation contributes to an individual's health and well-being;

The research contained in the report validates the importance and benefits of recreation to all members of the community and should be used by decision-makers in planning. The report also highlights that more needs to be done to reach low-income citizens who are, according to survey results, less likely to have access to programs and facilities.

The *Charter* is a powerful statement of the Rights of Ontarians in relation to parks and recreation and directly supports the Access Policy Framework. As well, it outlines the responsibilities for communities to ensure that citizens enjoy the health and social benefits of recreation.

I thank you for taking the time to review these documents and for considering how your municipality can utilize the information.

Sincerely,

Larry Ketcheson, CEO, Parks and Recreation Ontario

1 Concorde Gate, Suite 302, Toronto, ON M3C 3N6  
**TEL** 416.426.7142 **FAX** 416.426.7371 **Website** [www.prontario.org](http://www.prontario.org)

**Parks and Recreation: Essential for Quality of Life**