

## CPRA Briefing Note

### *Parks and Recreation Voice is Heard*



### **Federal Budget - April 2021**

On April 19, 2021, Minister of Finance Chrystia Freeland tabled the first federal budget in two-years. The budget was by far the longest in Canadian history at 739-pages. See: <https://www.budget.gc.ca/>

As expected, the budget was far-reaching in support to Canadians, communities and businesses. The budget themes were “finishing the fight against COVID”, “healing the economic wounds left by the COVID recession” and “creating more jobs and prosperity”.

Official Opposition Leader Erin O’Toole said that this was an ‘election budget’ and that it does not present a serious plan for economic recovery or for supporting workers and businesses. The Conservative Party announced that it will propose amendments to the budget, and the Conservative Caucus is expected to vote against the budget.

NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh has already indicated that his party will vote in favour of the budget, but also took the opportunity to continue his call for a wealth tax.

Bloc Leader Yves-François Blanchet called again for increasing the Canada Health Transfer to the provinces/territories.

### **Budget 2021 - Parks and Recreation Sector Voice Heard**

After a challenging year for community parks and recreation, the federal government has answered with a budget that provides strong support for recovery.

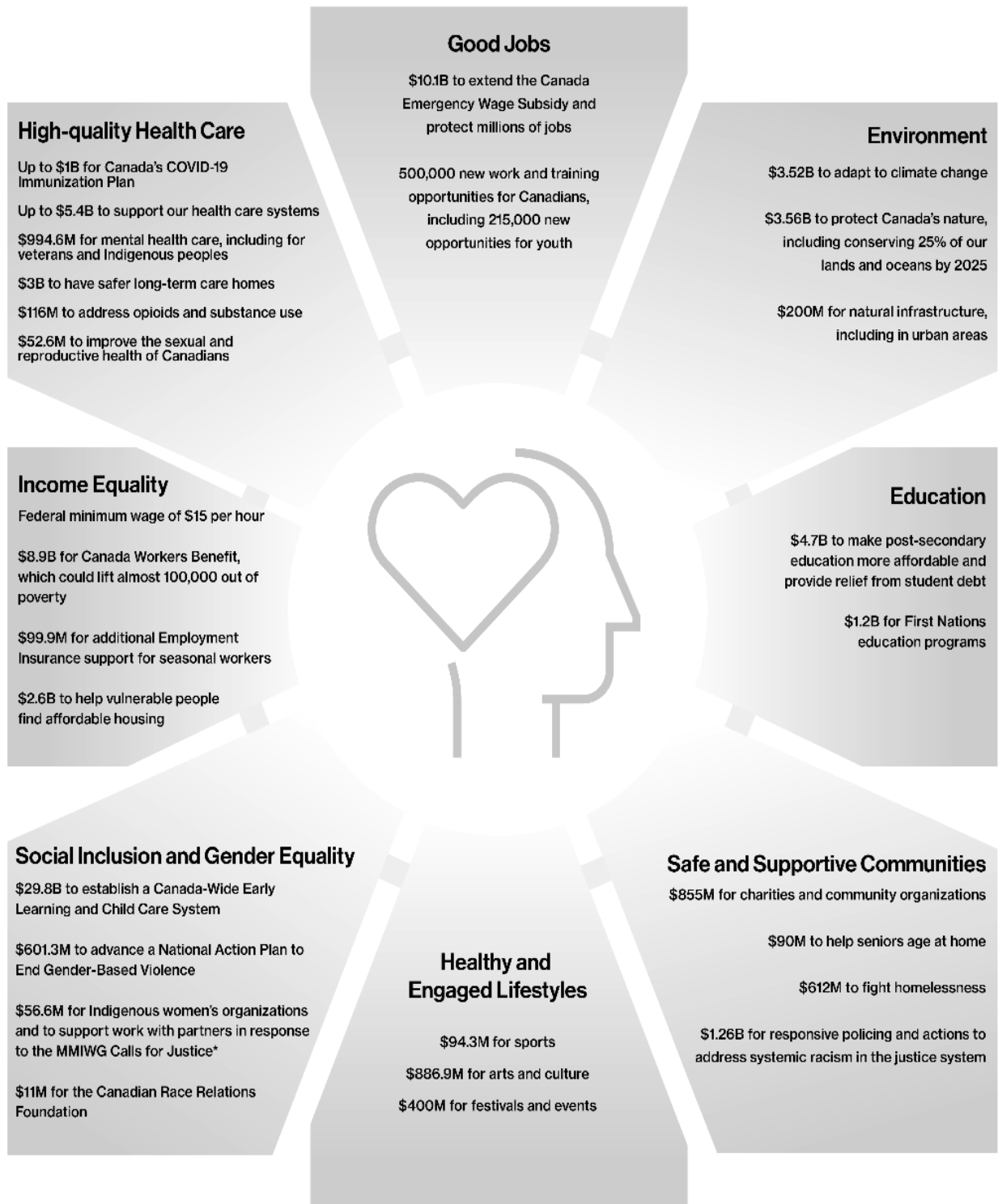
Respecting jurisdictional responsibilities, federal government budgets do not normally include extensive support directly to communities. But rebuilding communities is the foundation of the federal budget including funding for municipal infrastructure, community sport, not-for-profit organizations, local festivals, youth employment, grassroots anti-racism initiatives, green communities and local tourism.

CPRA has continued to serve as a strong voice to decision makers in Ottawa, and this was especially true over the past year. The federal budget reflects these efforts. CPRA will now turn its attention to ensuring that the sector is able to harness the full benefits of the budget commitments.

## Budget 2021 - Key Text

- *Strong and resilient cities, towns, and communities are the backbone of a strong economy and a growing middle class.*
- *As Canadians begin the work of building back better together, the government has a plan to develop more prosperous, inclusive, healthy, and vibrant communities across Canada.*
- *The government is investing in economic development in every corner of the country, supporting sectors like tourism, arts, and culture that have been disproportionately affected by lockdowns and travel restrictions, and working with provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to address long-standing challenges that predate the pandemic, such as affordable housing and aging infrastructure.*
- *Canada's charities, non-profits, social enterprises, and other organizations provide vital services to our communities, including to the most vulnerable members of Canadian society. They work constantly to address hunger, improve socioeconomic outcomes for diverse Canadians, and keep communities connected and informed.*
- *As we navigate our recovery, we must also bolster Canada's thriving social sector so that we can build healthy, resilient, and inclusive communities across the country.*
- *Before the pandemic began, an estimated 410,000 Canadians worked in the arts, entertainment, and recreation industries in February 2020, but that number fell drastically throughout the following year.*
- *Canadians of all ages have sacrificed time on the field, at the park, and on the ice to keep each other safe. Young Canadians, in particular, have missed out on the chance to learn new skills and make memories with their teammates. Sports and physical activity play a critical role in our mental health and in the social and economic revitalization of our communities.*

The following diagram in Budget 2021 provides an excellent snapshot of the government's priorities.



## **Budget 2021 - CPRA Response**

Since the tabling of the Budget, CPRA national office has already had several conversations with Ministers' offices, Parliamentary Secretaries and government officials to discuss CPRA's potential leadership role for many of these initiatives. These conversations will continue in the coming months.

In addition, CPRA commended the government on social media:

*CPRA commends the federal government for its commitment to the parks and recreation sector!*

*We thank the federal government for its commitment to national child care and we encourage the government to ensure multiple child care options are embraced, including before and after school recreation programs.*

*We are also proud to partner with the federal government to create youth employment opportunities in the parks and recreation sector and welcome the ongoing investment in youth employment.*

*Community sport, parks and recreation will all play a critical role in the recovery of the physical and mental health of Canadians – especially children. CPRA looks forward to supporting the government's efforts to remove barriers to participation in sport programming and to kick-start local organized sports that are accessible to all.*

*Municipal parks and recreation infrastructure is essential for healthy people and vibrant communities. CPRA thanks the federal government for the community infrastructure investments announced in today's federal budget.*

## **Budget 2021 -Summary of Commitments**

The following budget commitments will be of interest to CPRA and its members.

For the purpose of this briefing note, the commitments are broken down into:

- commitments that will be of direct value to CPRA 13 PT members
- commitments that will be of direct interest to municipalities
- commitments of national interest that will be pursued by CPRA with its national partners.

In the coming weeks, CPRA will seek out additional details on the commitments listed below.

## Commitments of Value to CPRA PT Members

- **Extension of the wage subsidy until September 25, 2021.** Gradual decrease of the subsidy rate, beginning July 4, 2021, in order to ensure an orderly phase-out of the program as vaccinations are completed and the economy reopens.
- **Extension the rent subsidy and Lockdown Support until September 25, 2021.** Gradual decrease the rate of the rent subsidy, beginning July 4, 2021, in order to ensure an orderly phase-out of this program as vaccinations are completed and the economy reopens.
- **\$300 million over two years**, starting in 2021-22, to establish a **Recovery Fund** for Heritage, Arts, Culture, Heritage and **Sport Sectors**.
- **\$400 million** in 2021-22 to create a temporary **Community Services Recovery Fund** to help charities and non-profits adapt and modernize so they can better support the economic recovery in our communities.
- Renew the Investment Readiness Program for **\$50 million over two years**, starting in 2021-22. This program **supports charities, non-profits, and social purpose organizations in capacity-building activities** such as business plan development, expanding products and services, skills development, and hiring.
- Launch public consultations with charities on potentially **increasing the disbursement quota and updating the tools at the Canada Revenue Agency's disposal**, beginning in 2022. This could potentially increase support for the charitable sector and those that rely on its services by between \$1 billion and \$2 billion annually.

## Commitments of Value to Municipalities

- **\$80 million over two years**, starting in 2021-22, to **remove barriers to participation in sports programming** and to help community organizations **kick-start local organized sports** that are accessible to all.
- A one-time investment of **\$2.2 billion to address infrastructure priorities in municipalities** and First Nations communities. This funding would be delivered through the federal Gas Tax Fund. The **Gas Tax Fund** would be **renamed as the Canada Community-Building Fund**.
- **\$500 million over two years**, starting in 2021-22, to the regional development agencies for **community infrastructure**. These projects will stimulate local economies, create jobs, and improve the quality of life for Canadians from coast to coast to coast.
- **\$200 million over three years**, starting in 2021-22, to establish a **Natural Infrastructure Fund** to support natural and hybrid infrastructure projects. This would help to improve well-being, mitigate the impacts of climate change, and prevent costly natural events. Examples in the budget included local parks and green spaces.

- **\$1.4 billion over 12 years**, starting in 2021-22, to top up the **Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund**, to support projects such as wildfire mitigation activities, rehabilitation of storm water systems, and **restoration of wetlands and shorelines**. Of this, \$670 million would be dedicated to new, small-scale projects between \$1 million and \$20 million in eligible costs.
- **\$500 million over two years**, starting in 2021-22, to the regional development agencies for community infrastructure under the Canada Community Revitalization Fund which targets locations such as main streets, farmers' markets, and other gathering places.
- Additional funding of **\$100 million over two years**, starting in 2021-22, to triple funding for the **Enabling Accessibility Fund** that supports small and mid-sized projects with not-for-profit organizations, women's shelters, childcare centres, **small municipalities**, Indigenous organizations, territorial governments, and small businesses.
- Establish a **federal minimum wage of \$15 per hour**, rising with inflation, with provisions to ensure that where provincial or territorial minimum wages are higher, that wage will prevail.
- **\$200 million** to support **local festivals, community cultural events, outdoor theatre performances, heritage celebrations, local museums, amateur sport events, and more**.
- **\$500 million Tourism Relief Fund** to support investments by **local tourism businesses** in adapting their products and services to public health measures and other investments that will help them recover from the pandemic and position themselves for future growth.
- **\$49.6 million over three years**, starting in 2021-22, for the **Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage Program**
- **\$15 million** in 2021-22 for the **Canada Cultural Spaces Fund**.
- **\$100 million** in 2021-22 to the Supporting Black Canadian Communities Initiative. The program **supports capacity-building of Black-led non-profit organizations so they can better serve Black Canadian communities**. *i.e., Black Wellness Cooperative of Nova Scotia promoting health, wellness and fitness.*
- **\$109.3 million in 2022-23** for the **Youth Employment and Skills Strategy** to better meet the needs of vulnerable youth facing multiple barriers to employment, while also supporting over 7,000 additional job placements for youth. *Note: CPRA is currently the delivery arms of this program for the municipal parks and recreation sector.*
- **\$371.8 million** in new funding for **Canada Summer Jobs in 2022-23** to support approximately 75,000 new job placements in the summer of 2022.
- **\$118.4 million over two years** starting in 2021-22, to conduct a two-year pilot expansion of federal investments in after-school programming under the Supports for Student Learning Program. These funds would support **national and local after-school organizations who work to ensure that vulnerable children and youth can graduate high school** and do not become further marginalized because of the pandemic.

## Commitments for National Engagement

- **\$30 billion over the next 5 years, and \$8.3 billion ongoing** for Early Learning and **Child Care** and Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care. *(CPRA is working to ensure recreation is included in the definition of child care)*
- **\$22.6 million over four years**, starting in 2021-22, to conduct Canada's **first ever National Infrastructure Assessment**. The assessment would help identify needs and priorities for Canada's built environment.
- **\$11 million over two years**, starting in 2021-22, to expand the impact of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation. This investment would help **community groups combat racism in all its forms**.
- **\$400 millions over five years** to support language reclamations, revitalization, Indigenous cultural spaces, **sport programming for indigenous women and girls**.
- **\$100 million over three years**, starting in 2021-22, to support projects for **innovative mental health interventions** for populations disproportionately impacted by COVID 19,
- **\$100 million** for marketing campaigns to help **Canadians and other visitors discover and explore the country**.
- **\$200 million** through the regional development agencies to support major festivals.
- **\$63.8 million over three years**, starting in 2021-22, to work with provinces and territories to complete **flood maps for higher-risk areas**.
- **\$100.6 million over five years**, starting in 2021-22, with \$4.7 million in remaining amortization, to enhance **wildfire preparedness in Canada's National Parks**.
- **\$1.9 billion over five years**, on a cash basis, starting in 2021–22, to support **provincial and territorial disaster response and recovery efforts**.
- **\$2.3 billion over five years**, starting in 2021-22, with \$100.5 million in remaining amortization, to:
  - **Conserve** up to 1 million square kilometers more land and inland waters to achieve Canada's 25 per cent protected area by 2025 target, including through national wildlife areas, and Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas.
  - Create thousands of **jobs in nature conservation and management**.
  - Accelerate new provincial and territorial protected areas.
  - Support Indigenous Guardians.
  - Take action to prevent priority species at imminent risk of disappearing, including through partnerships with Indigenous peoples

- Publish a **green bond framework** in the coming months in advance of issuing its inaugural federal green bond in 2021-22, with an issuance target of \$5 billion, subject to market conditions. Possible projects these green bonds could fund include **green infrastructure**, clean tech innovations, **nature conservation**, and other efforts to address climate change and protect our environment.
- **\$36.2 million over five years**, starting in 2021-22, to **develop and apply a climate lens** that ensures climate considerations are integrated throughout **federal government decision-making**.
- **\$755 million Social Finance Fund** and deploy up to \$220 million over its first two years. It is estimated that the Social Finance Fund could attract up to \$1.5 billion in private sector capital to support the development of the social finance market, create thousands of new jobs, and drive positive social change.