Understanding the Framework for Recreation and Parks in Canada: Frequently Asked Questions

November 3, 2026

A companion to Understanding the Framework: Backgrounder and Key Messages. For the Framework Leadership Team, the Expert Review Panel, CPRA staff, CPRA members, partners, Forward Together Summit delegates, and anyone speaking or posting about the Framework.

1. What is the difference between the Shared Agenda, Collective Impact, and the Framework?

They are three different things: an agreement, a model, and the strategy we are building. The Shared Agenda for Wellbeing is what we've agreed to work toward. Collective Impact is the model we use to get there. The Framework for Recreation and Parks in Canada is the strategy we are building together: the sector's interpretation and application of Collective Impact to our circumstances in Canada, including the structure, culture, tools, forums, measurement, and reporting that bring it to life.

2. Why does the Shared Agenda feel so high level?

That is by design. The Shared Agenda is written for federal, provincial, and territorial policy makers to endorse, and it is about systems change – shifting the conditions that hold problems in place, such as who makes decisions, how funding flows, and how governments and sectors work together. Many of the critical shifts therefore sit with governments and sector leaders rather than front-line staff. Front-line staff see the results in their programs and communities, and their experience tells us whether the shifts are working. Practical guidance and tools come as the full Framework is built with the sector.

3. What happens once governments endorse the Shared Agenda?

Endorsement is the starting line, not the finish line. In Phase 3, beginning in 2027, we build the rest of the Framework together, starting with detailed, resourced implementation planning in spring 2027. That work develops the remaining four pillars of Collective Impact: shared measurement, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and backbone support. Progress will be reported, and the priorities reviewed regularly, informed by practitioners' experience.

4. Does endorsement commit governments, or my organization, to new funding or programs?

No. Endorsement affirms a shared direction. It is not a program and not a spending commitment for any government or organization. Also, authority, budgets, and delivery stay with the governments and organizations responsible for them. Resourcing for implementation will come from many sources, including public, philanthropic, private, and community, and will be set out through implementation planning.

5. Will my community be told what to do?

No. The Shared Agenda is not prescriptive, and jurisdiction is respected. Each community contributes in the way that fits its needs and capacity, and starts from where it is. Many communities are already well along on some critical shifts and just beginning on others.

6. How does the Framework reflect Reconciliation?

Reconciliation is one of three themes that run through the Shared Agenda, alongside belonging and equity. The Shared Agenda recognizes First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples as rights holders and invites partnership on Indigenous terms. Indigenous-led design and stewardship appear among the critical shifts, and measures will be co-developed with Indigenous partners. Engagement with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis partners is ongoing and will continue through implementation.

7. When referring to the sector, whom do you mean?

By the "sector", we mean recreation, parks, grassroots community-based recreational sport, and arts and culture: one field that communities experience as a whole.

8. Who leads this work?

The Framework is owned by the sector. CPRA provides national backbone support, working with its provincial and territorial member associations: it coordinates and convenes, but it does not direct. The Framework Leadership Team and the Expert Review Panel have guided the work, and the roles of governments and partners are set out in the Shared Agenda.

9. How will progress be measured?

Progress will be assessed at three levels: how well the collective impact approach works, progress on the critical shifts, and the overall contribution to wellbeing in Canada. Indicators will be co-designed with the sector in Phase 3, building on existing data and evaluation systems, including measurement tools like CAN Active Insights.

10. How was the Shared Agenda developed?

The Shared Agenda was shaped by national consultation in 2024 and 2025 with more than 2,500 people from every province and territory, guided by the Framework Leadership Team, an Expert Review Panel, and reference groups, and reviewed by governments. It continues a national conversation that began in 1974, when Canada's ministers responsible for recreation recognized recreation as a social service in the same way as health and education, and carried forward through the 1987 National Recreation Statement and the 2015 Framework for Recreation in Canada.

11. How can my organization get involved?

Stay involved as we build the Framework together. Look at where your organization's work connects to the Shared Agenda's priorities and critical shifts, share what is working, and bring your experience and ideas to Phase 3 planning. Questions are welcome at any time: reach out to a member of the CPRA team.