

Media Release

Imagine that!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 14, 2020

Stratford Announces October Reopening of Gymnasium and Fitness Centre

The Town of Stratford is eagerly anticipating the reopening of the gymnasium and fitness centre located within Stratford Town Center. The area has remained closed to the public since COVID-19 emerged in March.

"We are working hard to prepare an operational plan that will allow us to open safely," said Stratford Mayor Steve Ogden. "During the closure we have encouraged residents to use our outdoor trails and parks or to support local fitness companies in our community as a means of being active. As cooler weather and shorter daylight hours approach, we know there will be less opportunity for outdoor activities, so it is a good time for us reopen".

There will be many changes in effect to allow for the opening beginning on Monday, October 5, 2020. Residents will notice increasingly familiar changes such as limits to the number of people permitted in the spaces, health screening and sign-in logs for contract tracing, increased hand hygiene stations, and signage and floor stickers reminding facility users to practice physical distancing.

Other changes will include the following:

• Hours of operation: Monday to Thursday 6:00am - 9:45pm

Friday 6:00am - 9:00pm Saturday & Sunday 8:00am - 6:00pm

- Reduced capacity for all spaces
- The track will <u>only</u> be used for walking and in one designated daily direction only
- No showers will be available
- Water bottle refill stations only will be available (no water fountains)
- Additional cleaning measures
- Spacing of fitness equipment to allow for physical distancing
- Signing in and out of the specific space which you will be attending programming or using our
 facility (ie: the gymnasium, walking track or fitness equipment) as numbers in each space will be
 tracked at all times. If/when maximum numbers are reached, users will be required to wait until
 space is available before entering the facility.

At this time face masks will be strongly encouraged for all users but not mandatory. This, like many of the guidelines above, may change on short notice by the Town of Stratford or the Province of PEI choosing to put in place tighter measures.

"The Town would like to remind users of the facility to be patient with our staff, and with each other, as we all continue to work together during these times," stated Councillor Steve Gallant. "COVID-19 has

changed the way that we all go about our daily lives which includes the need to practice physical distancing while enjoying our gym, walking track and fitness area. We must ensure that we remain compliant with all existing requirements for the safe operation of the facility and appreciate the understanding of the general public as we do so."

The Town of Stratford has relied on additional recreation spaces in our community to support our programming, however with these being unavailable for the time being, and with required cleaning between group bookings in our facility, the gymnasium and stage will remain primarily booked for recreation programs only. There will not be open gym time as there has been in the past however 1-3pm every Monday and Wednesday will be reserved for pickup basketball and 1-3pm on Tuesday and Thursday for pickup badminton. Otherwise recreational programming will be scheduled throughout the remaining times.

Those attending scheduled recreational programs will not be permitted to arrive more than 15 minutes prior to the start of the programming and will be asked to leave the facility within 10 minutes of the scheduled end of the programming. This will allow staff time to clean and reset the gymnasium space for the next scheduled program.

As the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve on PEI, changes are likely to occur. Facility users are reminded that these operational changes are in place to allow for the successful reopening of the fitness area and are asked to be respectful of them and our staff who will be required to enforce the rules in place.

"Our community is extremely lucky to have a facility like this available to them," added Mayor Ogden. "It is our hope that we can all work together to ensure a successful and positive experience for all users during these times. We look forward to welcoming residents through the doors in October."

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For more information please contact:

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