

Skate Saskatoon



Strategic Plan
2021 - 2024

1 INTRODUCTION

This ambitious Strategic Plan is intended to revitalize Skate Saskatoon (the Club) and has been informed by the guidelines and Long-Term Athlete Development Model (LTADM) of our provincial and national sport organizations, our athletes, strategic planning group activities and in consultation with stakeholders and former stakeholders.

The plan captures the essence of who we are and all we aspire to be. It describes our desired outcomes, sets forth strategies to achieve them, and outlines our responsibilities. We are committed to creating the Skate Saskatoon of tomorrow, firmly establishing our brand in the minds of the skating community of Saskatchewan.

In defining our future, we must focus on servicing the needs of our members and stakeholders. We need to place the skaters where they belong - at the heart of everything we do. As we look ahead, we must also remember where we came from, maintaining the legacy of our past successes while adapting to new challenges and opportunities. Skate Saskatoon is Saskatchewan's largest skating club. The club serves Saskatoon and the surrounding community by delivering Skate Canada endorsed programming such as CanSkate, STARSkate, CompetitiveSkate, SynchroSkate, CanPowerSkate and AdultSkate. Every year Skate Saskatoon teaches members of the community to skate for recreation, fitness, and athletic pursuits.

2 MISSION

“Our mission is to support skaters of all ages and abilities to realize their skating goals by providing excellent coaching, programming, facilities, and leadership.”

Skate Saskatoon supports its members in the pursuit of skating excellence. Professional coaches equip athletes at all levels with first-rate skating skills while ensuring that the needs and goals of the skater guide the training plan. Skate Saskatoon is committed to providing its members with a comprehensive skating experience through our exclusive year-round use of a figure skating ice surface and off-ice training space at the City of Saskatoon's ACT Arena. With skater-focused leadership, intentional programming, and collaborative coaching, skaters develop technical skating skills and the essential life skills of goal setting, problem-solving, teamwork, perseverance, and resilience which are necessary to reach their goals in the sport of skating and beyond.

3 VISION

“Our vision is to be the provincial leader in producing top quality figure skaters, where all skaters have the opportunity to realize their potential.”

The vision of Skate Saskatoon is to provide the community with the highest quality skating programs focusing on skater development and enjoyment of the sport. The Club's programs employ best practices in the industry to deliver a leading-edge training curriculum both on and

off the ice. The Club instills a sense of identity and belonging, gained through training, as well as team-building opportunities. Skate Saskatoon aspires to achieve a provincial reputation for excellence in programming, coaching, and performance.

4 GOALS

What are we trying to achieve, and how will we define our success?

The following goals have been developed as part of this plan:

- GOAL 1: Offer the highest quality learn-to-skate program which provides a strong foundation for all ice sports (figure skating, hockey, speed skating and ringette).
- GOAL 2: Offer a high-level training environment, by following Skate Canada’s LTADM, and current best practices for training figure skaters of all ages who have competitive or recreational goals.
- GOAL 3: Strive to emulate industry best practices in organizational and administrative leadership.
- GOAL 4: Improve the competitive success of our skaters by providing a full training program and be recognized as the leading training facility in Saskatchewan.
- GOAL 5: Develop a club identity and sense of community (“Team Saskatoon”) for all skaters.

The Club will measure success over the next 3 years according to the following objectives:

GOAL	OBJECTIVES
GOAL 1: <i>Offer the highest quality learn-to-skate program which provides a strong foundation for all ice sports (figure skating, hockey, speed skating and ringette).</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All programs will meet or exceed Skate Canada’s delivery standards • Skate Saskatoon will continue to be an early adopter of all Skate Canada’s learn-to-skate programs (e.g. CanSkate, CanPowerSkate) • Learn to skate programs will be fun and engaging in-order-to foster a positive environment conducive to rapid skill acquisition • Programs will be staffed with fiscal responsibility in mind
GOAL 2: <i>Offer a high-level training environment, by following Skate Canada’s LTADM, and current best practices for training figure skaters of all ages who have competitive or recreational goals.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs will employ the highest level of safety to minimize or eliminate injury • Coaches’ and Board actions/decisions will focus on the skater’s best interest above all else • An on- and-off ice competitive training program will be established • Program offerings for all classes of skaters will be maintained • Skilled, committed and team-oriented coaches will be available to match the variety of interest/budget of skaters • The Club will foster a culture of respect, discipline and inclusiveness with skaters, parents and coaches
GOAL 3: <i>Strive to emulate industry best practices in organizational and administrative leadership.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational practices and decisions will be guided by clearly written and up-to-date policies • Transparency in budgeting and decision making will be maintained • The Club’s leadership team will continue to focus on good budgeting and sound financial measures to provide stability to the organization • Effective and timely communication will occur among skaters, parents, coaches, and the Club’s office • Active succession planning with respect to volunteers, coaches, and staff will occur • Planning will be consistent with the Club’s mission and vision

GOAL 4: *Improve the competitive success of our skaters by providing a full training program and be recognized as the leading training facility in Saskatchewan.*

- Increased use of experts (technical specialists and judge consultations) prior to competition to enhance competition scores
- Ensure there is a smooth transition process from Advanced CanSkate to STARSkate which encourages skaters to continue in skating
- Skate Canada’s LTAD training targets including training volume (ice time), off- and on-ice activities will be readily available (dedicated section on the website) to competitive and pre-competitive skaters
- Processes to monitor the progress of all skaters along the LTAD pathway will be developed
- Competitive performance at provincial and national competitions will increase

GOAL 5: *Develop a club identity and sense of community (“Team Saskatoon”) for all skaters.*

- Create a sense of belonging and support for skaters
- Create positive opportunities for skater interaction on- and off-ice
- Club identity will contribute to the sense of achievement and increase participation
- Create opportunities for development after skaters have completed their competitive career



STRATEGIES

How will we attain our goals?

STRATEGY 1: COACHING TEAM

We will have a strong, cooperative, and skilled staff and coaching team to provide the highest level of training for our skaters.

Goals addressed: 1, 2, 4, 5

The importance of a skilled, dedicated, and cooperative coaching team in skater development cannot be overstated. To ensure Skate Saskatoon delivers the highest quality training both on and off the ice, we will place a high priority on empowering a strong leader with extensive skating knowledge to direct the future development of the program and build a strong team with the objective of building a positive and cooperative training environment comprised of individuals who all embrace a skater-first philosophy.

In addition, a high priority will be placed on developing job descriptions specifically outlining qualifications, skills and behaviours that will identify the requirements needed to build a strong and unified coaching team. A coaching team is most effective when all members work together as a unified whole with the interests of the skaters at the forefront of all decisions. Initiatives will focus on maximizing opportunities to harness individual strengths within our coaching team, and on increasing cooperation and reducing competition between coaches.

STRATEGY 2: CURRICULUM and PROGRAMMING

Programming will be further developed to ensure the on-ice and off-ice needs of our athletes are met for all stages of Skate Canada's LTAD, as well as recreational athletes.

Goals addressed: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Skate Canada's LTAD has been developed to help guide skaters, coaches, and parents with respect to on-ice training volume and complementary off-ice training types and volume at different stages in a skater's career to reach the national level.

A summary of the information for each stage of the LTAD will be made readily available to all skaters so that they can make informed decisions with respect to the goals of the skater.

On-ice group programming will be expanded to include edge/stroking classes for competitive or higher-level recreational skaters, with the possibility of adding other group programs (spins, transitions, etc.) in future.

On-ice scheduling will be constructed with the needs and safety of the skaters in mind, so that they have the opportunity to skate on sessions without skaters of widely differing abilities, while maintaining daily ice availability for skaters of all levels.

A Team Coaching model will be recommended for skaters wanting to pursue competitive skating. The current interests of the coaching staff with respect to fully participating in the training of competitive skaters (attending competitions, including out-of-province competitions, Team Saskatchewan activities, arranging or participating in monitoring sessions with technical specialists and/or judges, etc.) will be clearly indicated in job descriptions and on the website.

The development of a skater's abilities involves more than their on-ice personalized training. An off-ice program will be developed for skaters at each stage of the LTAD (this may include group instruction on site at the ACT Hall, or recommendations for off-ice activities such as strength/speed training, off-ice jump training, flexibility, dance, etc.) to improve skating performance.

Proper warm-up and cool-down are important to the performance and long-term health of skaters, and thus the ACT Hall will be made available for use as a warm-up/cool-down area.

STRATEGY 3: LEARN-TO-SKATE PROGRAMMING

The retention of skaters beyond Stage 3 of CanSkate will be increased.

Goals addressed: 1, 2

Skate Saskatoon will continue to work on ways to encourage participation in CanSkate rather than other learn-to-skate options in the city, including ensuring that we are competitive on a cost basis and ensuring that an energetic and fun coaching staff is present on all CanSkate sessions.

To help with skater retention beyond Stage 3 of CanSkate, the website will be improved so that the progression through our programs is clear for all ice sports, including how Stages 4-6 are beneficial for hockey and ringette, and that they

are a viable option without figure skates.

An increased social media presence will also be utilized to help keep members informed of all opportunities.

Parents of CanSkaters who are close to finishing Stage 3 will receive an information package regarding the options after Stage 3, including a progression flow chart that has branches for figure skating and hockey/ringette. In conjunction, the Stage 3-6 program that permits hockey skates will be rebranded so that it is a clear choice.

STRATEGY 4: SENSE OF COMMUNITY

We will strengthen the sense of community in our skaters and coaches by supporting club bonding and team-building opportunities.

Goals addressed: 1, 2, 4

Developing a group identity requires skaters to feel a sense of belonging to the club. It is possible to achieve this by instilling ideas of camaraderie and support among skaters from a young age. The Club will seek to build community around shared activities both at the rink (off-ice group classes, non-training skating sessions, etc.), at competitions (promoting the Club, wearing club gear, supporting each other),

and during non-skating activities (annual BBQ, club meetings, organized excursions).

Fostering relationships between more experienced skaters and younger ones offers both the opportunity to be inspired and mentored as well as learning opportunities.

STRATEGY 5: PHYSICAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES

We will develop the physical and human resources necessary to serve Skate Saskatoon members.

Goals addressed: 1, 2, 3, 5

VENUE: Skate Saskatoon skating programs are delivered at the City of Saskatoon's ACT Arena. Skate Saskatoon leases the figure skating ice surface on a long-term basis for the use of its club members seven days a week. The Club also leases the ACT Hall upstairs and therefore has access to this space for offering off-ice classes and for hosting club-related events such as competitions, meetings, and social gatherings.

EQUIPMENT: Skating programs depend on equipment such as on- and off-ice jump harnesses, learn-to-skate teaching aids, and a music system. The administrative office depends on computer equipment, a photocopier, and furniture. Some of this infrastructure will need to be replaced within the life of this plan. A capital replacement strategy will be created to ensure a viable replacement plan is in place.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND COACHING TEAM: Skate Canada professional coaches deliver Skate Saskatoon programs, while full-time and part-time paid staff support club operations. A detailed human resources plan will be developed and put into effect. It will include complement planning (complement needs analysis, and succession

planning); recruitment (selection procedures, appointment, probation); performance management (performance appraisals, supervision, addressing inadequate performance, career progression); training and development (training needs analysis, training strategies, competency development); staff relations (securing staff commitment, resolving disputes, addressing grievances, welfare, and culture).

Clearly written and easily understood contracts will address details including but not limited to job title, term of the contract, job status (full-time, part-time, casual), description of duties, professional conduct, remuneration, probationary term, performance review, conflict of interest, termination of contract, vacation, benefits, work schedule, rules and policies, club contact person, and acceptance and acknowledgement of the contract.

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT TEAM: A strong volunteer base provides additional support for the Club's skating programs and special events (e.g., assessment days, ice show). The growth of team-building activities will likely require further development in the volunteer support team. New initiatives will target volunteer recruitment, retention, on-boarding/training, recognition, and record keeping.

STRATEGY 6: GOVERNANCE

We will continue developing a strong club structure to lead the organization towards its goals.

Goal addressed: 3

The goal of the strategic plan is to transform the Club's current, primarily operational Board, to an engaged policy-based Board. The Board's goal is to structure the Club to empower staff to be fully responsible and accountable for the Club's day-to-day operations, while the Board of Directors can focus on governance-related matters such as organizational oversight, risk management, succession planning, and strategic planning. Despite the planned advances in the strategic plan, work will remain to continually review and refine Club polices and our governance structure. The Board of Director's focus will eventually focus on five key areas of best practice for not-for-profit organizations.

- Board Governance
- Financial Accountability and Transparency
- Fundraising
- Staff Management
- Volunteer Involvement



IMPLEMENTATION

The following describes who is responsible for implementing this plan.

The Board of Directors of Skate Saskatoon, Executive Director, Club Coaches, and Staff are responsible for implementing the strategic plan. The success of this Strategic Plan relies on the collaboration and transparency between all parties.

This Strategic Plan should be considered a living document and may be modified due to changes in the needs of the Club and its members. Measurable outcomes, as well as clear implementation timelines, will be developed by the Strategic Planning Committee, in consultation with other stakeholders.