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2021 SASKATCHEWAN SUMMER GAMES CALLED OFF DUE TO HEALTH AND SAFETY CONCERNS

Lloydminster to have first right of refusal in 2024

For immediate release

LLOYDMINSTER, SK (December 21, 2020) – To protect the health and safety of the athletes, volunteers, spectators, event staff, and residents of Lloydminster, the Saskatchewan Games Council, the City of Lloydminster, and the Lloydminster 2020 Host Society jointly announce the cancellation of the 2021 Saskatchewan Summer Games.

Amid rising concerns surrounding COVID-19 in Saskatchewan and Canada, and after careful consideration and ongoing discussions between the three parties, provincial sport organizations, districts and provincial authorities, it was decided the Games will not proceed in summer 2021.

The Games were originally scheduled for July 26 to August 1, 2020, but were postponed until summer 2021 during the first wave of the pandemic after an agreement was reached between the three parties in April 2020. The decision was informed through consultation with stakeholders, government and health officials.

Following the cancellation of these Games, the event will return to its quadrennial cycle, with the next Summer Games taking place in 2024. Saskatchewan Games host communities are typically awarded through a bid process, but due to circumstances surrounding the cancellation of the 2021 Summer Games, the Saskatchewan Games Council will provide the city of Lloydminster the right of first refusal to host the 2024 Saskatchewan Summer Games.

The Saskatchewan Games are one of the largest amateur sporting events in Saskatchewan, seeing participation from over 2,000 athletes, coaches and officials from every corner of the province. The biennial Games, which alternate between summer and winter, provide an opportunity for the province's developing athletes, coaches and officials to experience an exciting multi-sport event in preparation for higher levels of competition, including the Canada Games, Western Canada Summer Games, North American Indigenous Games, and the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Quotes

"The athletes' safety and comfort is paramount. Considering the guidelines in place for competitive team sports such as baseball, soccer, and rugby, to name just a few, as a Host Society, we cannot offer athletes and their supporters the experience they deserve. From the beginning, our board has maintained the Games need to be a memorable event. For many athletes, this is their first experience competing at the provincial level, and as a host society, one of our duties is to provide them with a true Saskatchewan Summer Games experience. We look ahead to welcoming the athletes, coaches and families when it is safe to do so." – **Kevin Kusch, Chair, 2020 Saskatchewan Summer Games Host Society**

"The Saskatchewan Games Council sends sincere gratitude to the community leaders who have dedicated so much time and energy towards the planning of these Games to date, as well as the entire Lloydminster community who has, since 2018, rallied around bringing this event to their city. We look forward to the next opportunity where we can work together to deliver an exceptional, safe, and celebratory Saskatchewan Summer Games for young developing athletes, coaches and officials across our province." – **Mark Bracken, Saskatchewan Games Council Executive Director**

"On behalf of the City of Lloydminster and the greater community, we thank the dedicated, community-minded volunteers who provided their time promoting the 2020 Saskatchewan Summer Games while navigating COVID-19. Sports, whether team or individual, inspire and unite us. Together we'll weather the storm as we build

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toward economic recovery, and the return of competitive sports and Lloydminster’s potential to host the 2024 Saskatchewan Summer Games.” – **Mayor Gerald Aalbers, City of Lloydminster**

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