



***A New Way Forward***

**An Alberta Sport Policy Framework**

**June 2010**

## **Foreword**

Across Canada sport is on the rise. Our athletes experienced unprecedented success at the recent Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. The federal government and provinces like British Columbia and Quebec have chosen to build on this success by making significant investments in sport.

In Alberta, however, sport is facing real challenges including significant cuts in government funding and a lack of leadership at the provincial level. While other provinces forge ahead we are in danger of drifting backwards and losing our place as a leader in sport in Canada and in our communities.

These challenges also present a significant opportunity. If sport wants to have a place at the table with the provincial government, we need to have a collective voice, a voice that speaks for the sector as a whole and not for any one sport or special interest. We need to think big and to think bold. We have a chance to think about the structure and leadership of our sector in Alberta – to bring forward the big ideas we will need to continue to flourish.

Recognizing both these challenges and the opportunity that they present, over the past year sport leaders in Alberta have come together, with support from Sport Alberta leaders, to begin to map out a **new way forward** for sport. We began with a discussion between twenty five sector leaders in Banff in April 2009 and continued with a cross-province consultation in January 2010. Later we reached out to the participants in this consultation process and to other leaders in the sector through a follow-up survey.

This report builds on the outcomes of this engagement across the sector and lays out a sport policy framework for Alberta. This framework is built on and would not have been possible without the input and ideas of dozens of sport leaders across the province. Although Sport Alberta initiated the conversations upon which it is based, we need to be clear that this is not about Sport Alberta – it is about the challenges that we face and the opportunities we can pursue as a sector and with our fellow Albertans. It is about laying out a vision for the sector and creating the tools we need to make this vision a reality.

Alberta has always been a leader in sport, in Canada and in the world. I am proud to have been a part of this sector in this province for the last quarter century. It is my hope that this framework will help us to come together as a sector and to ensure that we maintain our leadership in the coming years.

**Dale Henwood**  
**Chair, Sport Alberta**  
**June 2010**

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## **Summary of Recommendations**

The Alberta Sport Policy Framework articulates a number of core recommendations both for the sport sector and for the provincial government as follows:

### **For the Alberta Sport Sector**

#### **1. Strong Leadership**

***Recommendation 1: Collaboration by the sport sector to develop and implement a preferred approach or approaches to long term, strategic, independent sector leadership as an Alberta “Own the Podium,” Alberta Sport Cooperative or Alberta Sport Federation.***

#### **2. Financial Resources**

***Recommendation 2: Sport leaders need to create a regular forum to identify and work on issues and areas of common concern, focused on innovative financing strategies and entrepreneurial capabilities.***

***Recommendation 3: Sport leaders also need to create an ongoing forum through which to identify and implement ideas to improve the sector’s efficiency by enhancing organizational cooperation.***

#### **3. Facilities and Infrastructure**

***Recommendation 4: Organizations such as local sport councils, where developed, need to play a lead role in linking sport organizations so that they can work collectively on priority issues and integrated planning with municipalities.***

#### **4. Developing an Athlete-Centered and Coach Led System**

***Recommendation 5: Focus on improved communications between sports and sport related systems, such as education, health, and recreation at the regional/municipal level.***

***Recommendation 6: Continue to implement and support regional sport development and high performance centres.***

**For the Government of Alberta**

**1. Strong Leadership**

***Recommendation 1: The provincial government should engage the sport sector in the creation of an independent, expert driven sport agency.***

***Recommendation 2: In consultation with the sector, the provincial government should develop and implement an Alberta Sport Policy.***

**2. Financial Resources**

***Recommendation 3: The province should allocate dedicated resources for the development of sport leaders.***

***Recommendation 4: The provincial government should restore the funding that was cut from the sector in its most recent budget and bridge the gap between Alberta's (\$23m) and British Columbia (\$48m) in its respective public investment in sport.***

***Recommendation 5: The provincial government should recognize the important role played by volunteers through the creation of a Sport Volunteer Tax Credit.***

**3. Facilities and Infrastructure**

***Recommendation 6: the provincial government should renew funding for sport infrastructure investments in the province.***

***Recommendation 7: the provincial government should make infrastructure renewal a part of the Alberta Sport Policy***

**4. Developing an Athlete-Centered and Coach Led System**

***Recommendation 8: Implement LTAD across the sport system as well as those systems that relate to sport, such as education, health, recreation and community.***

***Recommendation 9: Design funding strategies that reward, incentivize and encourage communication, collaboration and cooperation between sports in the pursuit of shared goals***

## **1.0 Introduction and Context**

Over the past three decades the sport sector in Alberta has come of age, beginning with the Commonwealth Games in Edmonton in 1978 and continuing through the Winter Olympics in Calgary in 1988 and in the preparations for Vancouver in 2010. During this time the sport sector has come to play an increasingly important role in Alberta's economy, and has become a significant contributor to the health and success of our families and communities.

***Every other government is moving forward in terms of funding while Alberta moves back.***

Currently, however, the sector faces a number of challenges. In a time when most provinces and the federal government are increasing their support for sport, in the last provincial budget the

government cut \$1.8m of core funding for the sector – the equivalent of an 18.5% reduction for most provincial sport organization. At the same time, the support for infrastructure investments in sport facilities is not being renewed.

Every other government is moving forward in terms of funding while Alberta moves back.

Compounding this challenge is a lack of accountability for sport in the provincial government. The sport sector does not have a dedicated Minister while the branch of the government that is accountable for sport claims that the Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation (ASRPWF) is responsible for decisions regarding the sector while the ASRPWF claims that the government does not respond to the recommendations that it makes.

As the federal government begins its review of the Canadian Sport Policy, Alberta needs to be in a position to contribute. An updated Alberta Sport Plan is essential and timely.

This is a critical opportunity for sport leaders to build on the progress made by the sector and the excitement of the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games to:

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- Effectively and efficiently support community and provincial sport organizations in the province; and
- Provide meaningful leadership and advocacy on behalf of the sector as a whole.

The good news is that Albertans are engaged with and value sport. Polling undertaken before and near the end of the Olympic Games is unequivocal (see **Appendix 1** for a summary of polling data):

- Over two thirds of Albertans had heard of *Own The Podium*, the federal high performance agency, going into the Games, think that it is important to continue an initiative of this kind going forward, think that it was a worthwhile investment by the government and think that it had a positive impact on our results at the Games.

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- A similar number of Albertans thought that it is important or very important for Canada to finish in the top three in medals at the Vancouver Games.
- More than three quarters of Albertans thought that our success in the Games would have a very or somewhat positive impact on the level of participation in Winter Sports and, more broadly, in motivating Albertans to become more physically fit.

It is clear from the survey data that Albertans are more aware of high performance sport than other Canadians (with the exception of British Columbia) and that they value high performance sport both in and of itself and for the benefits it can deliver. These findings are at odds, however, with the actions of the Alberta government who, uniquely in Canada, followed up the tremendous showing by Albertan athletes in the Olympics with significant (18.5%) cuts to the funding for sport organizations in Alberta. There seems to be a significant disconnect between the views of Albertans and the actions of the government.

Similarly, Alberta has an emerging health crisis in obesity with skyrocketing rates of related diseases and health conditions such as hypertension and type II diabetes. Again, the data is clear that success by Albertan athletes is seen as a strong motivator for participation in winter sport and for Albertans to become more physically active in general. It would seem then that there is a significant lost opportunity for the government in Alberta as they diminish the potential positive physical activity 'wake' of the Olympics by making significant cuts to sport organizations.

Building on the opinions and ideas of sport leaders and respecting the clear desires of Albertans, this report lays out a policy framework for the sport sector in Alberta. This framework is intended to be both an internal tool to communicate and clarify a new vision and a new set of priorities for the sector and an external tool to communicate the priorities of the sector as a whole to decision makers in government. The framework begins with a diagnosis of the sector as it is currently structured, its assets and opportunities and its goals looking to the future. It continues with a summary of the case for action, beginning with the potential contribution of sport to the province and building on the considerable contributions that the sector is currently making. It concludes with a clear set of directions for the sector moving forward,

***Albertans are more aware of high performance sport than other Canadians ... and that they value high performance sport both in and of itself and for the benefits it can deliver***

This policy framework is a map that will enable our sector to continue to grow and prosper and that will clearly demonstrate Alberta's continued leadership in sport in Canada.

## **2.0 The Case for Action**

Sport is an integral part of our families, communities and our province. Sport can and does make a significant contribution to all facets of our lives from health, to education to our economy. This chapter outlines the case for action in support of a healthy and vibrant sport sector in Alberta.

### **2.1 The Sport Sector in Alberta**

Over a half million Albertans volunteer in the sport and recreation sector with:

- 4,970 organizations
- 19,770 paid employees
- 532,080 volunteers, including nearly 400,000 volunteers specifically engaged in sport:
  - 83,000 volunteer coaches
  - 64,000 volunteer referees or umpires
  - 252,000 volunteer helpers<sup>1</sup>.

Sports and Recreation organizations are the most common type of organization in Alberta, accounting for 26% of all organizations. Despite the size of the sector, however, sports and recreation associations only attract about 10% of the total revenues of non-profit and voluntary sector organizations in the province.<sup>2</sup>

In contrast to this impressive level of volunteerism, there is a downward trend in the number of adult Albertans who regularly participate in sport and recreation.<sup>3</sup> Further, 57% of children in Alberta between the ages of 5 and 17 are not active enough for optimal growth and development.<sup>4</sup>

Despite the important role that sport plays in the lives of Albertans, sport infrastructure in the province is aging rapidly. In 2005, for example, 77% of the sport facilities in the province were over 25 years in age. One third of Albertans, in turn, reported that sporting facilities in their communities were either poorly maintained or inaccessibly far from their homes.

Sport in Alberta is funded through the Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation (ASRPWF) which had a budget in 2009-2010 of \$25.1 million that will be reduced to \$23.3 million in the coming year. Investments in sport by the Foundation are realized through six programs:

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<sup>1</sup> [www.cd.gov.ab.ca](http://www.cd.gov.ab.ca)

<sup>2</sup> [www.imaginecanada.ca](http://www.imaginecanada.ca)

<sup>3</sup> Alberta Community Development Annual Report 2003-2004

<sup>4</sup> [www.calgaryhealthregion.ca](http://www.calgaryhealthregion.ca)

### ***1. Support to Provincial Associations***

The Alberta Sport Plan has identified organizational capacity as an area of emphasis. In response to the identification of this priority, the Foundation created the Association Support Grant. This grant assisted organizations in improving their organizational capacity. Many provincial associations have demonstrated a consistent ability to deliver tangible sport and recreation benefits throughout Alberta, but their growth potential is often limited by the lack of staff or volunteers.

The Association Support Grant has now been rolled into the over \$8 million in support that the Foundation provides annually to provincial sport and recreation organizations. This financial support enables the organizations to provide core administrative services to their organizations, while also providing support for other programs and services the organizations choose to offer.

In addition, the Foundation provides office space and other administrative services to over 60 provincial sport and recreation organizations through the Percy Page Centre. The Centre, located in Edmonton, allows organizations to network with like organizations as well as have services such as meeting rooms, printing and video conferencing available at cost-recovery rates.

### ***2. Multi Sport Games***

Multi-sport games bring together Alberta's best in a showcase of skill, sportsmanship and triumph. The Foundation provides support for athletes and coaches to attend the Western Canada, Canada Summer and Winter and Arctic Winter Games. Provincial sport organizations are provided support through training and selection funding for Interprovincial and International Games and through Zone Development funding for Alberta Games.

Support is also provided to host communities for the Alberta 55 Plus Summer and Winter Games, and Alberta Summer and Winter Games. The Department of Tourism, Parks and Recreation provides support for the Arctic and Western Canada Games.

### ***3. Hosting***

The Foundation's Hosting Program is designed to encourage the development of and participation in sport, recreation, parks and wildlife activities through sporting and non-sporting events. Grants are provided to provincial sport and recreation associations and local clubs and organizations to host western Canadian, national and international events.

### ***4. Alberta Sport Development Centre Network***

The Foundation continues to support the development of Alberta's emerging athletes and coaches through the Alberta Sport Development Centre Network (ASDC). This network, which is coordinated with post-secondary institutions throughout the province, hosts Centres in Grande Prairie, Fort McMurray, Red Deer, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Calgary and the Capital Region (Edmonton).

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The Foundation also provides support to the Canadian Sport Centre Calgary, the Steadward Centre for Personal and Physical Achievement and the Indigenous Sport Council (Alberta) to support emerging and high performance athletes.

### ***5. Coaching***

As some of the best and brightest leaders in Alberta, coaches serve our communities as positive role models and mentor our children from the playground to the podium, benefiting athletes throughout the province. The Foundation created the High Performance Coach program, after this area was identified as a priority in the Alberta Sport Plan. Twenty four Provincial Sport Associations now employ high-performance coaches through the program.

The Foundation is also the provincial coordinator of multi-sport coaching courses offered as part of the National Coaching Certification Program. By working with the Coaches Association of Canada, the Foundation works with host agencies and learning facilitators throughout the province to offer coaching education in the community.

The Foundation also provides coaching initiatives grants for individuals looking to further their coaching education and for provincial associations looking to develop their coaches by bringing experts in from outside Alberta.

### ***6. Development Initiatives Grants***

These grants are provided to create opportunities for Albertans of all ages to participate and to thrive.

## **2.2 The Value of Sport**

Albertans have always had a sense of the intrinsic value of sport. This sense of value is demonstrated in the ways in which we support sport at the local and community level, the rate at which we volunteer to coach and officiate and the lengths to which we go as parents to ensure that our children have the opportunity to benefit from sport. Whether we are traveling to the soccer pitch up the street or driving for hours to reach the nearest city to play in a tournament, sport is an important part of our culture and our society.

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More recently, sport leaders have begun to more formally articulate what sport can do for Alberta and, more broadly, what it can do for Canadians. In discussion, they highlighted four (4) primary areas where sport can and does make a contribution to Alberta:

- 1. Improved Health**
- 2. Positive Child and Youth Development**
- 3. Inclusive and Connected Communities**
- 4. Strong Economies**

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Each of these areas of contribution has been explored at length by the True Sport Foundation who produced a report entitled “*What Sport Can Do: The True Sport Report*”. This report is the most comprehensive look to-date at the benefits of sport for individuals, families and communities in Canada. This report defines community sport as sport that is:

*Led, organized, supported or enabled by community volunteers and institutions. It runs from the playground to the podium, ranging from simple pick-up games, to community and school-based leagues, to elite high performance competition.*

Ninety two percent (92%) of Canadians believe that community-based sport can have a positive influence in the lives of youth, and sport ranks second only to families as a potential positive influence in the lives of young Canadians.

Sport leaders across Alberta articulated a broad range of contributions that sport can make to our families, communities and province. One key contribution is **improving health and well being** by increasing physical activity levels, reducing childhood and adult obesity, preventing chronic disease like cancer, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and others. Sport is also an important factor in enhancing mental health by enhancing self esteem and diminishing clinical symptoms for diseases such as depression.

For example, the most common cancers in Alberta (prostate, breast and colorectal) also show the strongest preventative link with physical activity. The risk of colon cancer is reduced by up to 50% for those who are physically active compared with those who are not.<sup>5</sup>

***The sport sector is a significant contributor to the health of Albertans and to the quality of life in our communities.***

The potential impacts of sport on health and, by extension, on government spending on health are significant. Currently, almost 40% of Alberta's budget is spent on health, yet nearly half of the population (48%) are

not taking any actions to improve their health.<sup>6 7</sup> As such, an important outcome of this contribution is the capacity of sport to help reduce rising health care costs. Currently, health care costs are rising faster than the rate of inflation. These costs are estimated to consume a third of the government of Alberta's annual budget. Sport is one of the best hopes of containing rising health costs. It is estimated that physical inactivity costs Canadians \$1.6 billion a year in direct and \$3.7 billion a year in indirect costs.

Another impact of sport on communities and families is to help **set children and youth on a healthy life course**. In sport, the most important determinant of whether children have a positive or negative experience is the quality and capabilities of the adults who are involved, in particular, the quality of coaching and mentoring. When done right, however, sport can help

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<sup>5</sup> [www.health.gov.ab.ca](http://www.health.gov.ab.ca)

<sup>6</sup> [www.alberta-canada.com](http://www.alberta-canada.com)

<sup>7</sup> [www.health.gov.ab.ca](http://www.health.gov.ab.ca)

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children to learn and develop through play which helps to provide enhance mobility, coordination, knowledge about the world and self confidence. It also helps to build and strengthen the motor skills and other physical tools that a child will rely on for the rest of its life.

One of the greatest benefits of sport for children and youth, particularly for girls, is the potential to reduce high-risk behaviours. Young athletes are more likely to eat healthily, less likely to smoke, use drugs, engage in sexual activity and are less likely to feel bored and hopeless. Participation in sport is also strongly linked to improved educational outcomes including higher levels of attendance at school and higher levels of academic achievement.

A third contribution of sport to Alberta is its ability to build **stronger and more inclusive communities**. Participation in sports at the community level helps to build trust between individuals and to create a reciprocal sense of well being – what has sometimes been called ‘social capital’. People who participate in sport are more likely to participate in other important aspects of a community’s life such as voting. Sport is also a powerful tool for helping to integrate newcomers into our communities and to breakdown barriers between newcomers and other local residents.

Nationally, almost all Canadians (92%) believe that community level sport can have a positive influence on the personal and moral development of youth. However, fewer than one in five Canadians feel very confident that this potential is currently being realized.<sup>8</sup>

Sport can also help to create a strong sense of pride and identity. One has only to see the impact of the Vancouver Games on Canada’s sense of national pride and identity to understand the important potential impact of sport in bringing us together and creating a sense of shared identity.

Finally, sport is an important **economic contributor** at the local, regional, provincial and national levels. In Canada, for instance, Canadians spent \$15.8 billion on sport in 2004, or almost 2.18% of all household spending. This figure is even higher in Alberta with the average Albertan family spending \$2,136 per year on sport related expenditures. Sport is an important driver of tourism – almost a third of all tourist trips in Canada include participation in sport or other outdoor activities.

***Sport is a significant contributor to Alberta’s economy with the average Albertan family spending \$2,136 on sport related events and equipment every year.***

Sport leaders across the province identified a range of opportunities through which its existing base of sport and recreational assets could be mobilized to help deliver these impacts (over). These assets and opportunities are summarized in the following two sub-sections.

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<sup>8</sup> [www.cces.ca](http://www.cces.ca)



### 2.3 Alberta's Sport Assets

Sport leaders in Alberta identified a broad range of assets that both contribute to the sector's current success and that could be leveraged to amplify the sector's impact in the future. In particular, they highlighted:

**Human Resources** – Sport leaders highlighted the ~400,000 sport volunteers who contribute to the success of the sector across the province and professional coaches, trainers, administrators, researchers and medical specialists who support the sector.

**Facilities** – The province of Alberta and many municipalities have made a significant investment in sport infrastructure and facilities. This investment has been amplified in recent years through the RiNC component of the Federal Government's national economic stimulus plan.

**Natural Environment** – Another important asset that was identified was the natural environment. Alberta is blessed with unparalleled access to natural

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resources that are ideal for both winter and summer sport. Banff national park, for example, attracts over 8 million visitors a year.

**Culture** – Sport leaders emphasized that Alberta has a culture both of volunteerism and of sport participation. The sport sector is a vibrant component of many small towns across the province as a result.

*Alberta is blessed with unparalleled access to natural resources that are ideal for both winter and summer sport*

**Community Engagement** – Because of its size and the isolation of many municipalities, sport leaders felt that Alberta has a unique sense of community engagement. This is particularly true in more remote parts of the province such as Grande Prairie and Lethbridge.

**Hosting Experience** – Many municipalities in the province have experience hosting major sporting events. Sport leaders suggested that this experience can and should be leveraged to identify and attract a range of national and international sporting events to the province in the future.

**Sport Science/Sport Medicine** – A final asset is Alberta's expertise in sport science and sport medicine, both through its universities, regional sport development centres and through the Canadian Sport Centre Calgary.

### **2.4 Opportunities for Sport in Alberta**

Sport leaders have identified a number of important opportunities for the sector to make a contribution in Alberta. Many of these opportunities have come to fruition as a result of the development and maturation of the sector over the past three decades. The most significant opportunities that sport leaders identified included:

**Coordination** – One opportunity that was identified across the province was the potential to improve coordination and communication across sports within communities and across communities in the province. In a connected world, sport in Alberta is not connected. While investing in connectivity requires capacity, connectivity, over time, generates a return on investment by generating capacity.

Leaders emphasized the need to move beyond the stove piping that has traditionally meant that each sport competes for the same participants, the same facilities, the same volunteers and the same resources. One of the factors that could bring this opportunity to fruition would be the creation of the right incentives to encourage and reward cooperation within sport and in relation to school and community systems. Canadian Sport for Life provides the framework around which coordination should occur.

**Innovation** – Another significant opportunity that could arise out of improved coordination would be the ability to capitalize on the range of innovations that have emerged across the province in local communities to adapt to and meet the

needs of their individual opportunities and challenges. In particular, it was felt that there is the potential for communities to share their best practices, learning from each other to help grow stronger community sport systems.

**Strategic use of current and new funds** – Rather than focus on the need for new resources, (which was a challenge identified by some leaders), many leaders identified the need to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the resources that are currently allocated within the sector and as new funds enter the system.

An emphasis was placed on the need to encourage strategic partnerships and other novel strategies to increase the impact of funding and to leverage additional funding for sport in communities.

*(There is a need to) encourage partnerships and other novel strategies to increase the impact of funding and to leverage additional funding for sport in communities.*

**Leadership** – One of the most important opportunities that has emerged over the past few years is the possibility of mobilizing a more active leadership function in the sector. This leadership function should focus on establishing a central vision for the sector and developing impactful communications messaging. On the basis of this vision it would develop a set of goals and priorities that would form the basis of ongoing advocacy work with the province and with municipalities. This leadership function would not be a decision making body but rather a structure to enable leaders within the sector to make contributions to build a stronger and more effective sector.

**Sport Culture** – A fifth opportunity was to build on the existing sport culture in Alberta to implement leading sport development strategies such as Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD). Other opportunities that derive from the province's sport culture include the potential to better integrate sport with the educational system and with the health and wellness sector. In particular, it was felt that sport could play a critical role in the prevention of a range of diseases and conditions that place a significant burden on the public health system.

**Structure of the Sport Sector** – A sixth opportunity that was identified was the potential for the sector to bridge the two classic schisms in Alberta: the divide between urban and rural centres and the divide between the North and the South of the province. One of the most important aspects of this opportunity is the potential to develop strategies to increase the opportunities for high performance athletes in rural and northern regions so that they can stay in their communities and still receive a high level of training. A new, modernized, structure is suggested.

**Increased Focus** – A final opportunity that was identified was the increased interest and focus on winter sport as a result of the Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver. These games were viewed as having the potential to be a seminal moment for sport in Canada and one that would drive the participation of a whole new generation of winter athletes. With the success of Canadian athletes at the games it seems likely that this increased attention on sport will manifest both in increased resources, but also in greatly increased demands for services.

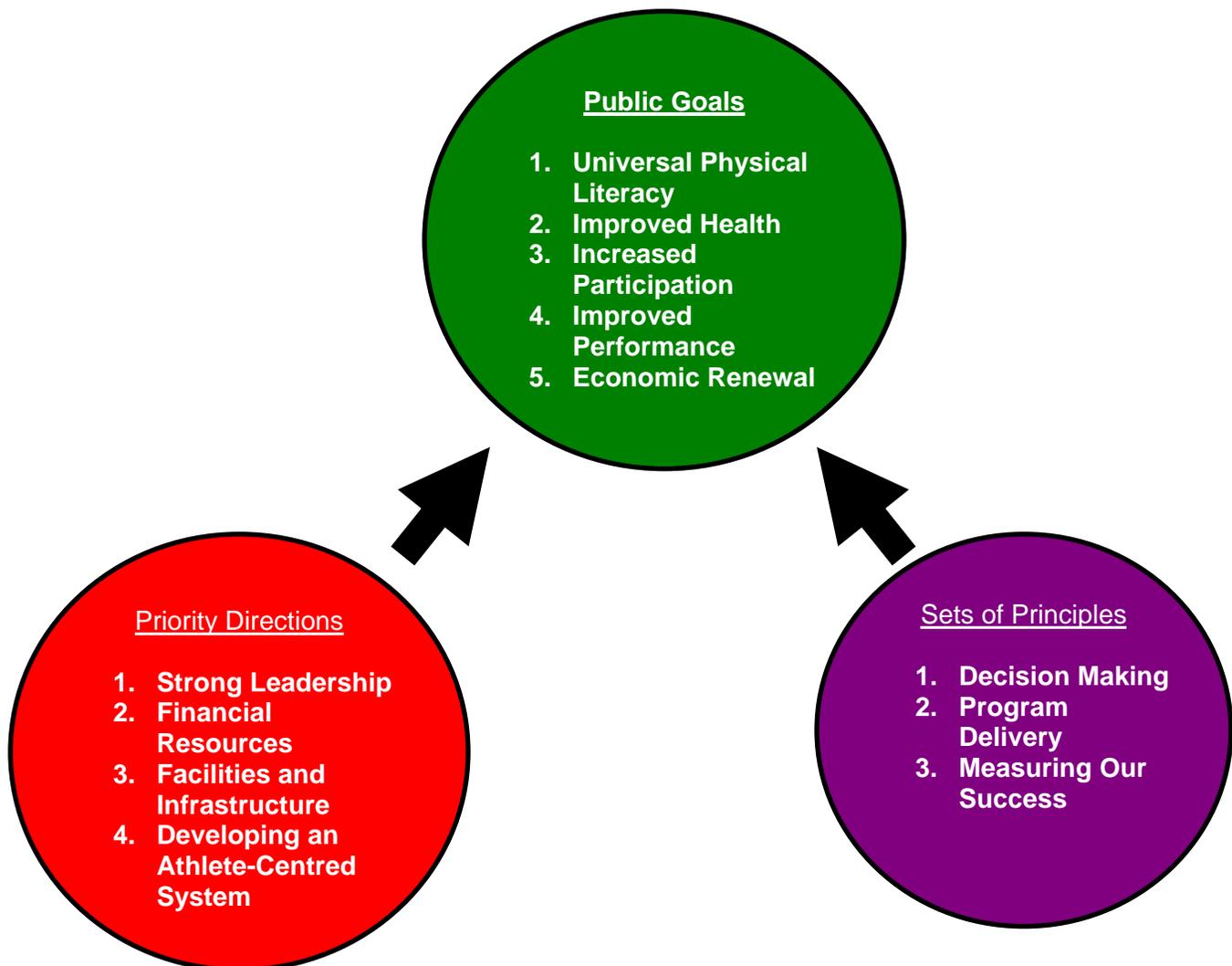
### 3.0 A New Way Forward – New Directions for Sport in Alberta

Sport leaders in Alberta have significant aspirations for the sport sector and for its contribution to the province, our communities and Albertans.

This proposed framework – *a new way forward* - for sport in Alberta adopts a simple premise. The framework posits that the sector is aiming to achieve five *public goals*. To achieve these goals, the framework identifies four *priority directions* and three sets of *core principles*. The public goals, priority directions and principles all align with the Canadian Sport for Life / long term athlete development model.

#### 3.1 Public Goals, Priority Directions and Core Principles

Sport leaders in Alberta articulated a set of clear public goals. The achievement of these goals, however, will depend on the sector and the provinces ability to advance a number of priority directions while attending to three sets of core principles.



### **3.1.1 What are the *public goals* of the Alberta sport sector?**

Sport leaders in Alberta have significant aspirations for the sector – they see it as a major contributor to a number of policy and community objectives. Some of the goals that are the most important and most inspirational for the sport sector include:

- 1. Universal physical literacy** – Ensuring that all children and youth develop the skills and motivation that they need to be active on a daily basis, for life.
- 2. Improvements to health and well being** – Sport in Alberta has an opportunity to set specific goals and targets for active living, health promotion and illness prevention.
- 3. Increased participation** – Arrest and reverse the decline in adult and child/youth participation rates in Alberta.
- 4. Improved performance** – Alberta should be the provincial leader in high performance sport in Canada and recognized in the international sport sector as a sporting destination of choice.
- 5. Innovative use of sport for economic renewal** – Alberta sport has an opportunity to expand its entrepreneurial capabilities through the development of social enterprises, including internationally recognized sport tourism and hosting initiatives.

### **3.1.2 What are the *priority directions* for the sport sector in Alberta?**

Over the past year, sport leaders have clearly identified **four priority directions** for the sport sector in Alberta, to help move towards the achievement of these goals:

- 1. Strong Leadership**
- 2. Financial Resources**
- 3. Facilities and Infrastructure**
- 4. Developing an Athlete-Centred System**

These goals and a related set of recommendations are discussed in more detail in **Section 3.2** of the chapter

### **3.1.3 What are the principles that underpin these priorities?**

These directions are underpinned by three sets of core principles that have been articulated by sport leaders in the province. These principles are at the core of this policy framework and should form the backbone for a renewed provincial sport policy for Alberta.

***Principles for decision-making***

**1. Strong Leadership**

Strong leadership that advances a sector-wide view that is consistent with the principles of LTAD and that adopts a “raise all boats” approach, rather than singling out “winners” and “losers”. It is still important, however, to balance this strong central voice with the innovation that is fostered at the grass roots.

The understanding of leadership needs to include both collective leadership and individual leadership. Sport administrators and coaches at both the provincial and municipal level should be formally recognized and engaged in the decision-making process for sport.

**2. Shared Knowledge**

Sharing knowledge so that all sport communities and organizations can learn from the experiences of others and thus make better decisions.

**3. Independent Decision-Making**

Strong and independent decision-making whereby the sector takes its own decisions on resource allocation to achieve its own aspirations and agreed upon public policy outcomes, free from direct political influence and conflicts of interest.

**4. Evidence-Based Approach**

As better data is available, decisions in the sector should be evidence-based, building on the best knowledge and information, and on rigorous analysis. Sport leaders expressed concern that too often decisions are taken on the basis of political considerations and not on the basis of quantifiable data.

The essential data must be identified through a collaborative process with sport organizations and their administrators and coaches.

**5. Sustainability**

Decisions taken that impact on the sport sector must be effective in the short term while also ensuring the longer term health and vibrancy of the sector.

**6. Goal-Orientation**

An important truism about the sport sector is our achievement orientation. For the most part, sport is about pushing ourselves to set goals and to achieve our objectives. An important principle for the sport sector in Alberta to succeed going forward will be its ability to set clear goals and to mobilize the sector towards their achievement.

**7. Collaborative decision-making**

Sport organizations could create collaborative programs that would arise from shared decision-making and goal setting. The LTAD model stresses the need for collaboration between schools, sport clubs and community groups in the best interests of athlete development.

***Principles for program delivery***

**1. Diverse and innovative delivery models**

It was clear that one of the real strengths of the sport sector in Alberta is its diversity of structures, organizations and communities. Leaders across the province have embraced this diversity and the innovation that has emerged from this diversity to meet local needs and requirements. It is critical that the new direction for the sector support and enable this depth of innovation.

**2. Taking a Whole-Systems Approach**

Alberta should be a leader in the implementation of Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) strategies and this strategy could form the basis of a whole-systems approach. It is critical that the new direction encompasses the full range of activities from casual, recreational sport to high performance international competition.

**3. Efficiencies in Administration**

Efficiency is an underlying principle of any effective system. This is true at all levels of sport from national sport organizations through to club teams at the municipal level. Collaborative decision-making and program delivery should be at the centre of this strategy.

***Principles for measuring our success***

**1. Transparency**

It is critical for sector leaders to understand how and why decisions are taken and funding is allocated and to be able to measure the outcomes of these decisions.

**2. Accountability**

Further, it is also important that leadership within the sector have both the capacity to take decisions and, as a result, have the accountability for their outcomes based on a clear set of metrics, measures and outcomes. Accountability is not just a system of checks and balances, at its core it is a vital tool to ensure that public investments are delivering results for Albertans.

**3. Measurement**

The sport system should move immediately to engage in a collaborative process to develop measurement systems and metrics based on LTAD. Metrics should be related to the public goals and to the priority directions. Measure would include programs and participants, including coaches.

## **3.2 On Priority Directions for the Sector**

The following two sub-sections take a look at the priority directions that should be undertaken by the sport sector and by the provincial government, respectively, to ensure our continued growth, vibrancy and a new way forward. Each of these directions will require commitment and action both from the government and from the sector.

### **3.2.1 Strong Leadership**

The sector does not need to wait for the government to take action on leadership in the sector. There are a range of successful leadership models that could be implemented in the absence of strong direction from the government:

**Alberta ‘Own The Podium’** – The OTP model has been incredibly successful at the national level. One option would be for the sport sector in Alberta to create a set of formal partnerships that lay out a new direction for the sector and a new set of roles and responsibilities. Rather than waiting for the government to react, the sector could bring this new model with its strong partnerships to the government and invite them to participate.

**Alberta Sport Cooperative** – Alberta has a long history of creating cooperatives to provide important services that no single individual or organization could provide. In the absence of leadership from the government, the sector could choose to create an Alberta Sport Cooperative to establish a vision for the sector, create a strong strategic plan to implement this vision and provide an accountability mechanism for its achievement. As with the Alberta OTP model, the sector would then invite the government to contribute to the success of the model, rather than relying on the government to provide leadership.

**Alberta Sport Federation** – A third model would be the creation of an Alberta sport federation to serve as an umbrella group representing the view and requirements of the sector to the government. To be effective, the federation would require the participation and support of the vast majority of provincial sport organizations in the province.

Each of these models would have its strengths and weaknesses. The Alberta OTP model would require the development of summer and winter caucuses, articulation of clear, shared goals and objectives, as well as negotiation of potentially contentious partnership agreements. It would also be oriented more at high performance sport than on the development of community level sport, which may be a good place to start.

By contrast, the Sport Co-Op model would be easier to establish but would require the participation of a broad segment of the sport sector to be effective. Further, it might not have the same degree of political impact as a true sport federation.

The Alberta Sport Federation could be a potent political tool. Its creation, however, would require the participation of and resources from the vast majority of provincial sport organizations and community sport councils. For this to occur there would need to be a clear and compelling reason for those organizations to come together and bridge their traditional differences.

***Recommendation 1: Leadership by the sport sector to develop and implement a preferred approach or approaches to long term, strategic, independent sector leadership.***

### **3.2.2 Financial Resources**

Sport requires exceptional leaders to develop, administer, coach, officiate, promote and engage the public and participants. Significant improvements will need to be made in the training and development of these leaders in the years ahead in order to ensure the continuation of a sustainable and accountable sport system in Alberta. Some examples of the kinds of improvements that will be important include:

- Developing a better working relationship between: ASRPWF, PSOs, Community Sport Councils (i.e Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge, Red Deer), ASDC's, educational institutions, and national partners (i.e. CSC Calgary, Own the Podium, Winsport, Canada's Sport Hall of Fame) and
- The creation of a professional designation/association for sport administrators with standards and codes of conduct.

Leaders can play an important role by implementing strategies to foster these improved working relationships such as the creation of a provincial human resources initiative.

***Recommendation 2: Sport leaders need to create a regular forum to identify and work on issues and areas of common concern, as well as innovative financing strategies and entrepreneurial capabilities.***

There is also an important opportunity to look at improving the administrative efficiency of sport organizations through increased organizational cooperation. In times of comparative plenty it makes sense to have a broad range of organizations that develop their own innovative organizational structures. In times of scarcity, however, it is important to look at these structures and see if there are opportunities to improve the administrative efficiency of the system overall and to align and streamline existing administrative functions.

Provincial level sport may want to learn from successful regional sport delivery successes to achieve efficiencies in its operations and improve support to the vast number of communities and programs that are available. For these programs to be as impactful and effective as possible, program delivery and development support needs to be closer to users.

***Recommendation 3: Sport leaders also need to create an ongoing forum through which to identify and implement ideas to improve the sector's efficiency by enhancing organizational cooperation.***

### **3.2.3 Facilities and Infrastructure**

Currently, there is a lack of communication between the organizations that are responsible for sport development and delivery and those that are responsible for the operation of facilities in the province (that are largely owned and operated by municipalities or educational institutions). Increased coordination between these groups would lead to better utilization of the facilities that do exist in order to maximize access and availability, and to ensure the efficient use of public dollars.

***Recommendation 4: Organizations such as local sport councils, where developed, need to play a lead role in linking sport organizations so that they can work collectively on priority issues and integrated planning with municipalities.***

### **3.2.4 Developing an Athlete-centred and Coach-led System**

There is a significant opportunity for Alberta's sport sector to become a national leader in the implementation of LTAD concepts and principles. These principles would play out at the provincial level by creating incentives for cooperation between sports, particularly in relation to young and developing athletes as well as coaches. They would also play out at the municipal and regional levels through strategies to increase coordination and cooperation between and among sports. For instance, working to ensure that one sport's season finishes before the next sport begins.

***Recommendation 5: Focus on improved communications between sports and sport related systems at the regional/municipal level.***

Another important aspect of an athlete-centred and coach-led system is that it should create opportunities for promising competitive athletes to receive high level support and training in their own communities for as long as possible. This has already begun to take shape in Alberta through the network of regional sport development and high performance centres.

***Recommendation 6: Continue to implement and support regional sport development and high performance centres.***

### **3.3 New Directions for the Government**

As outlined earlier in this policy framework, there is an important role to be played in the sport sector both by the sector itself, and by governments. This section outlines a set of actions and outcomes that should be undertaken by governments to support Alberta's sport sector. These directions for the provincial government are best taken through engagement with the Alberta sport sector.

#### **3.3.1 Strong Leadership**

It is clear that Alberta needs a more efficient and effective leadership structure; one that better enables the delivery of sport services in the province and that has accountability for the allocation of financial resources, the implementation of public policy objectives, and the advancement of the sport system in the province. This organization should set clear goals for sport in the province, have clear accountability for outcomes and results.

There are any number of models to choose from that have the clarity of purpose and the independence in governance which sport sector leaders are seeking, including the structural model of Sport Manitoba, the modernization agenda now being implemented in British Columbia whereby an agency is allied to existing leadership entities (i.e., Sport BC, CSC Pacific, BC Games), the partnership agreement between Sport Quebec and the government of Quebec that negotiates leadership functions through contract, or the shared leadership model of the Own the Podium 2010 initiative at the national level.

In any case, the new organization, would be a lean, independent, skills-based, expert-driven body that would be responsible for leading the strategic investment in sport in the province and that would be accountable to Albertans.

***Recommendation 1: The provincial government should engage the sport sector in the creation of an independent, expert driven sport agency.***

The provincial government also needs to develop and implement a sport policy for Alberta. As an interim step, it could begin by renewing and refreshing the Alberta Sport Plan in 2010 and then initiate an Alberta sport policy development project in the lead up to the Canadian Sport Policy renewal process in 2011. This sport policy would include both broad high level objectives along with specific and tangible measures and benchmarks.

***Recommendation 2: In consultation with the sector, the provincial government should develop and implement an Alberta Sport Policy.***

#### **3.3.2 Financial Resources**

A primary message from the sport sector was its interest in self-sufficiency and innovative leadership. Unfortunately, there has been little investment in government can support this critical sector development by allocating dedicated resources for the training and development of sport leaders in the province.

***Recommendation 3: The province should allocate dedicated resources for the development of sport leaders.***

There is also room for significant investments to support the development of the sport sector in Alberta. Unfortunately, the most recent budget 2010-11 is moving in the opposite direction with a significant cut to ASRPWF funding that will result in an 18.5% cut in provincial funding for provincial sport organizations.

***Recommendation 4: The provincial government should restore the funding that was cut from the sector in its most recent budget and bridge the gap between Alberta's (\$23m) and British Columbia (\$48m) in its respective public investment in sport.***

A final direction for the government to take in supporting the sector should be the creation of a tax credit for sport volunteers. Currently, coaches, officials and other sport volunteers spend thousands of their own dollars annually to enable the continued success of community sport. The social and community value of their contribution should be recognized through the creation of a sport volunteer tax credit.

***Recommendation 5: The provincial government should recognize the important role played by volunteers through the creation of a Sport Volunteer Tax Credit.***

### **3.3.3 Facilities and Infrastructure**

The growth of sport in the province is directly tied to the availability of and access to facilities and a stronger link needs to be made between provincial sport policy, delivery organizations and the operators and developers of these facilities in Alberta. An important start will be for the provincial government to renew funding for sport infrastructure in the province.

***Recommendation 6: the provincial government should renew funding for sport infrastructure investments in the province***

Further the renewal of sport infrastructure needs to be an explicit component of Alberta's sport policy. In particular, the policy should address the following question: How is the development of athletic facilities, which occurs mostly at municipal level, tied to the overall plan for sport development in Alberta?

***Recommendation 7: the provincial government should make infrastructure renewal a part of the Alberta Sport Policy***

### **3.3.4 Developing an Athlete-centred and Coach-led System**

Over the past several years there have been significant developments in the sport sector that have helped to ensure that it takes an athlete-centred and coach-led approach in the development of its programs and opportunities. In particular, sport leaders have come to recognize the value of the Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) approach that recognizes the differing needs of athletes at differing stages of their development.

***Recommendation 8: Implement LTAD across the sport system as well as those systems that relate to sport, such as education, health, recreation and community.***

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To make this approach a reality there is a need for investment in the education, governance and operation of sport at the municipal and provincial level. In particular, there is a need for strategies and incentives that encourage communication and cooperation between local and provincial sports, as opposed to current funding strategies that discourage collaboration and cooperation.

***Recommendation 9: Design funding strategies that reward, incentivize and encourage communication, collaboration and cooperation between sports in the pursuit of shared goals***

## **4.0 Next Steps**

**This policy framework is only the continuation of a longer and broader process of growth and renewal for the sport sector in Alberta. Ultimately, this process can and should lead to a new sport policy for the province, to more engaged and active leadership in and by the sector, to a more competitive fiscal framework for Alberta sport, and to a more accountable and independent governance structure.**

In moving towards the achievement of this broader agenda there are a number of important roles and functions that sport leaders have identified as being important including:

1. Creating a clearinghouse and think tank for new ideas and new knowledge in the sector, ensuring regular meetings and other forums are held such that ideas emerge, data is collected and analyzed, and opinions are expressed openly.
2. Ensuring that there is an active and engaged voice for sport in the province. This voice should speak for the sector as a whole and engage directly to lobby and advocate for the sector with governments;
3. Enabling a coordinating and collaboration function within the sector that will enable sport leaders to contribute to the growth of the sector as a whole and in relation to the Canadian Sport for Life / Long Term Athlete Development model;
4. Continuing to work on a broader strategic plan for the sector, ensuring that it stays evergreen and that it continues to represent the opportunities and challenges of the sport sector across the province; and
5. Developing measurement strategies and metrics that address the public goals and priority directions and the framework of Canadian Sport for Life. The goal is to provide tangible evidence that progress is being made, and where progress is not being made, to enable course correction and adaptation in real time.

## Appendix I: Post Olympic Polling Results Alberta

This data is pulled from the Alberta component of an Angus-Reid omnibus survey looking at the views of Canadians on sport pre and post Olympics. The Alberta component of the survey had 100 respondents in the Feb 2, 2010 survey and 86 respondents in the follow-up survey on Feb 25, 2010, out of approximately 1000 participants across Canada. The margin of error on the national survey is +/- 3.1%, 19 times out of 20. The sample size from Alberta involves a comparatively smaller sample size and would have a larger margin of error as a result, mitigated somewhat by the strong degree of correlation between the results of the national survey and the Alberta component of the data.

### An Overview of the Data

	Alberta		Canada	
	Positive Impact/ Important	Negative Impact/ Not Important	Positive Impact/ Important	Negative Impact/ Not Important
1. (Feb 25, 2010) Own The Podium is an organization that was created to improve Canadian athlete performances at Olympic and Paralympic Games. Prior to today were you aware of Canada's Own The Podium initiative?	55%	41%	65%	34%
2. (Feb 02, 2010) How important to you is it that Canada continues an initiative like this beyond 2010?	74%	26%	70%	30%
3. (Feb 02, 2010) Thinking about the 2010 Olympic Games, how important is it, to you personally, for Canada to finish among the top three of 84 countries in terms of numbers of medals won?	73%	27%	66%	34%
4. (Feb 02, 2010) Thinking about the 2010 Olympic Games, how important is it, to you personally, for Canada to show the world that we are a force to be reckoned with when it comes to Winter Sports?	75%	25%	68%	32%
5. (Feb 25, 2010) In your opinion, what kind of impact has Canada's Own The Podium initiative had on the results achieved by Canadian athletes so far in the 2010 Olympic Winter Games?	66%	11%	64%	16%
6. (Feb 02, 2010) If Canada were to finish among the top three countries in terms of the number of medals won, what impact would this have on ...Canadian pride?	92%	2%	87%	2%
7. (Feb 25, 2010) In your opinion, what kind of impact have the results achieved by Canadian athletes so far in the 2010 Olympic Winter Games had on - Canadian pride?	92%	3%	93%	4%

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8. (Feb 02, 2010) If Canada were to finish among the top three countries in terms of the number of medals won, what impact would this have on ...Canadian unity (i.e. bringing Canadians together)?	79%	4%	76%	5%
9. (Feb 25, 2010) In your opinion, what kind of impact have the results achieved by Canadian athletes so far in the 2010 Olympic Winter Games had on - Canadian unity (i.e. bringing Canadians together)?	83%	6%	87%	6%
10. (Feb 02, 2010) If Canada were to finish among the top three countries in terms of the number of medals won, what impact would this have on ...Motivating more Canadians to participate in Winter Sport programs and clubs?	84%	3%	82%	3%
11. (Feb 25, 2010) In your opinion, what kind of impact have the results achieved by Canadian athletes so far in the 2010 Olympic Winter Games had on - Motivating more Canadians to participate in winter sport programs and clubs?	78%	2%	76%	2%
12. (Feb 02, 2010) If Canada were to finish among the top three countries in terms of the number of medals won, what impact would this have on ...Motivating more Canadians to get physically active in general?	77%	3%	74%	5%
13. (Feb 25, 2010) In your opinion, what kind of impact have the results achieved by Canadian athletes so far in the 2010 Olympic Winter Games had on - Motivating more Canadians to get physically active in general?	75%	2%	72%	4%
14. (Feb 25, 2010) Over the past 5 years, \$117 million was invested in Own The Podium, whose goal was to help Canadian athletes win the most medals at the 2010 Olympic Games. This funding was provided by the Government of Canada and corporate sponsors. Even though Canada will not win the most medals, in your opinion was the investment in Own The Podium...	77%	18%	84%	23%

## **A. Summary:**

Several trends are clear from the data:

- About 70% or just over two thirds of Albertans had heard of Own The Podium going into the Games, think that it is important to continue an initiative of this kind going forward, think that it was a worthwhile investment by the government and think that it had a positive impact on our results at the Games.
- A similar number of Albertans thought that it is important or very important for Canada to finish in the top three in medals at the Games and who that we are a force to be reckoned with at Sports.
- More than three quarters of Albertans thought that our success in the Games would have a very or somewhat positive impact on the level of participation in Winter Sports and, more broadly, in motivating Canadians to become more physically fit.

Implication: Albertans clearly recognize that an OTP-like program is critical to achieve results in high performance. Support for these types of programs is tied to whether or not the individual being surveyed thinks that it is important for Canada to do well in international competition (with over two thirds of Albertans expressing the view that this is an important and appropriate goal).

- There was a shift in the number of individuals who thought that Canada's results at the Games would have a positive impact on national pride and unity and a significant shift in the number who thought that it would have a significant impact at the end of the Games (before the Games most Albertans thought it would have only a moderate impact).
- There was no impact pre and post Olympics on the number of Albertans (approx two thirds) who thought that the Games would positively impact on participation in Winter sports or, more broadly, impact on their level of participation.

## **B. Analysis:**

The polling data suggests a number of interesting findings:

1. It is clear that Albertans are more aware of high performance sport than other Canadians (with the exception of British Columbia) and that they value high performance sport both in and of itself and for the benefits it can deliver.
2. In the other areas surveyed, Alberta was very much in line with the rest of Canada, in terms of the value that they place on high performance sport and the importance of positive outcomes in engendering national pride and a desire to participate and become more active.
3. These findings are at odds, however, with the actions of the Alberta government who, uniquely in Canada, followed up the tremendous showing by Albertan athletes in the Olympics with significant (18.5%) cuts to the funding for sport organizations in Alberta. There seems to be a significant disconnect between the views of Albertans and the actions of the government.

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4. Similarly, Alberta has an emerging health crisis in obesity with skyrocketing rates of related diseases and health conditions such as hypertension and type II diabetes. Again, the data is clear that success by Albertan athletes is seen as a strong motivator for participation in Winter sport and for Albertans to become more physically active in general. It would seem then that there is a significant lost opportunity for the government in Alberta as they diminish the potential positive physical activity 'wake' of the Olympics by making significant cuts to sport organizations.
5. It is also clear that Albertans understand the importance of leadership. They understand the impact of and support funding for Own The Podium, a national organization that provides funding for high performance athletes. Albertans understand the importance of leadership and, in fact, have shown considerable leadership in the sport sector in Canada, in the past. Rather than who leadership, however, the current government continues to abdicate its responsibility to the Foundation and then chooses to obfuscate and ignore its recommendations.

To summarize, the numbers suggest that there are three main disconnects in the sport sector in Alberta:

1. Between the value and pride that Albertans take in their sporting achievements and the decreasing level of support from the provincial government;
2. Between the cost of the health crisis in obesity and the failure to support a sector that can provide cost effective preventive measures; and
3. Between the desire for leadership and the lack of leadership and accountability on the part of the government.

### **C. Survey Data**

**15. (Feb 25, 2010) Own The Podium is an organization that was created to improve Canadian athlete performances at Olympic and Paralympic Games. Prior to today were you aware of Canada's Own The Podium initiative?**

65% of Albertans had heard of OTP, this is significantly higher than the national average of 55%, suggesting that Albertans are more aware of high performance sport than other parts of the country (with the exception of British Columbia)

**16. (Feb 02, 2010) How important to you is it that Canada continues an initiative like this beyond 2010?**

69% thought that this was somewhat or very important with a combined 31% thinking that it is either not very or not at all important. This is similar to the national numbers with 74% thinking it's important nationally and 26% thinking it is not very or not at all important.

**17. (Feb 02, 2010) Thinking about the 2010 Olympic Games, how important is it, to you personally, for Canada to finish among the top three of 84 countries in terms of numbers of medals won?**

Similar numbers to 2 (above) with 66% thinking that it is somewhat or very important with a combined 34% thinking that it is either not very or not at all important. These are similar to the national numbers where 73% thought it was somewhat or very important and 27% thinking it was not very or not at all important.

**18. (Feb 02, 2010) Thinking about the 2010 Olympic Games, how important is it, to you personally, for Canada to show the world that we are a force to be reckoned with when it comes to Winter Sports?**

67% thought that it was somewhat or very important with a combined 33% thinking that it is either not very or not at all important. Again, this is similar to the national numbers at 75% and 25% respectively.

**19. (Feb 25, 2010) In your opinion, what kind of impact has Canada's Own The Podium initiative had on the results achieved by Canadian athletes so far in the 2010 Olympic Winter Games?**

Four times as many Albertans thought it had had a positive impact. 64% indicated that it had a mostly positive impact, while 16% indicated that it had been negative. These are similar to the national numbers at 66% and 11% respectively.

**20. (Feb 02, 2010) If Canada were to finish among the top three countries in terms of the number of medals won, what impact would this have on ...Canadian pride?**

87% thought it would have a somewhat or very positive impact, versus 2% who thought it would have a somewhat negative impact. These numbers are similar to the national numbers at 91% and 2% respectively.

**21. (Feb 25, 2010) In your opinion, what kind of impact have the results achieved by Canadian athletes so far in the 2010 Olympic Winter Games had on - Canadian pride?**

93% of Albertans thought that the results at the Games had a very or somewhat positive impact versus only 4% who thought it had a somewhat or very negative impact. These are comparable to the national numbers of 92% and 3% respectively.

**22. (Feb 02, 2010) If Canada were to finish among the top three countries in terms of the number of medals won, what impact would this have on ...Canadian unity (i.e. bringing Canadians together)?**

76% thought it would have a very or somewhat positive impact versus 3% who thought it would have a somewhat or very negative impact. These are very comparable to the national numbers of 79% and 4% respectively.

**23. (Feb 25, 2010) In your opinion, what kind of impact have the results achieved by Canadian athletes so far in the 2010 Olympic Winter Games had on - Canadian unity (i.e. bringing Canadians together)?**

87% of Albertans thought it had a very or somewhat positive impact on national unity, while 6% thought it had a somewhat or very negative impact on unity. The national numbers were 83% and 5% respectively.

**24. (Feb 02, 2010) If Canada were to finish among the top three countries in terms of the number of medals won, what impact would this have on ...Motivating more Canadians to participate in Winter Sport programs and clubs?**

82% thought it would have a very or somewhat positive impact with 3% who thought it would have a somewhat or very negative impact. These are similar to the national numbers of 84% and 4% respectively.

**25. (Feb 25, 2010) In your opinion, what kind of impact have the results achieved by Canadian athletes so far in the 2010 Olympic Winter Games had on - Motivating more Canadians to participate in winter sport programs and clubs?**

77% thought the impact was very or somewhat positive on participation, versus only 2% who thought it was somewhat or very negative. Again, these are similar to the national numbers of 83% and 5% respectively.

**26. (Feb 02, 2010) If Canada were to finish among the top three countries in terms of the number of medals won, what impact would this have on ...Motivating more Canadians to get physically active in general?**

74% thought the impact was very or somewhat positive on participation versus only 5% who thought it was somewhat negative. These are similar to the national numbers of 77% and 2% respectively.

**27. (Feb 25, 2010) In your opinion, what kind of impact have the results achieved by Canadian athletes so far in the 2010 Olympic Winter Games had on - Motivating more Canadians to get physically active in general?**

72% thought it would have a very or somewhat positive impact while 3% had a somewhat or very negative view. These are similar to the national numbers of 78% and 3% respectively.

**28. (Feb 25, 2010) Over the past 5 years, \$117 million was invested in Own The Podium, whose goal was to help Canadian athletes win the most medals at the 2010 Olympic Games. This funding was provided by the Government of Canada and corporate sponsors. Even though Canada will not win the most medals, in your opinion was the investment in Own The Podium...**

74% of Albertan thought the funding was very or somewhat worthwhile while s 24% thought it was not very or not at all worthwhile. Again, very similar to the national numbers of 77% and 19% respectively.

## **Appendix 2: A Commitment to Sport – A Provincial Comparison**

April 2010

### **A. Overview**

This document provides an overview of the commitments that have been undertaken by the Federal Government and by the provinces and territories with regard to sport. In particular, we have focused our comparison on seven (7) indicators:

1. **Sport Policy** – Does the jurisdiction have a current sport policy?
2. **Sport Plan** – Does the jurisdiction have a current sport plan?
3. **Core Funding** – What is the current trend in terms of funding levels for sport?
4. **Tax Policy** – Are there measures in terms of tax policy to support sport?
5. **Government-based Leadership** – Are there innovative measures in place within the government to provide leadership on sport issues?
6. **Sector-led Capacity Building Organization** – Is there a sector-led organization focused on capacity building in this jurisdiction?
7. **Dedicated Infrastructure Investments** – Is there dedicated funding for sport infrastructure?

### **B. Summary of Findings**

Several interesting findings emerge from the analysis:

1. **The Federal Government is Leading the Way** – Currently, the federal government is leading the way on sport policy and investment in Canada. In the last budget, the government committed more than \$22M of new incremental funding for sport. In addition, there is a significant effort underway to review and renew the Canadian sport policy. From a sector perspective, a number of organizations such as The Sport Matters Group are providing leadership on capacity building.
2. **Alberta is Falling Behind** – Unlike in most other jurisdictions in Canada, Alberta, a province that was a leader and an innovator in sport as recently as a half decade ago, is falling behind. While all other jurisdictions in Canada are either holding the line or even increasing their funding to sport, Alberta has implemented an 18.5% cut. All other leading sport jurisdictions have either a sport plan or strategy, or both and yet Alberta has let their sport plan lapse with no alternative in place or in sight. Most other jurisdictions have continued to set aside significant funding for sport infrastructure while Alberta has allowed their funding to lapse. Finally, many jurisdictions support their amateur sport sector through supporting tax policies, another area in which Alberta has fallen behind.

### **C. Recommendations**

The analysis undertaken to develop this summary is, by necessity, preliminary and incomplete. It would be very useful to undertake a more in-depth analysis of sport public accounts to get a clearer apples-to-apples comparison of sport funding in Canadian jurisdictions.

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Indicator	AB	Feds	NS	Nfld	PEI	NB	Que	Ont	Man	Sask	BC	Yukon	NWT	Nun
<b>1. Sport Policy</b>	No	Till 2012 <sup>i</sup>	Yes	Yes <sup>ii</sup>	Yes <sup>iii</sup>	No	Yes	Yes <sup>iv</sup>	Yes <sup>v</sup>	No	Yes <sup>vi</sup>	No	No	No
<b>2. Sport Plan</b>	Lapsed <sup>vii</sup>	No	Till 2014 <sup>viii</sup>	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>ix</sup>	Yes <sup>x</sup>	Yes	Yes <sup>xi</sup>	No	No	No
<b>3. Direction re Core Funding</b>	- 18.5% <sup>xii</sup>	+22M <sup>xiii</sup>	Even <sup>xiv</sup>	+1.4M <sup>xv</sup>	Even <sup>xvi</sup>	-	+24M <sup>xvii</sup>	Even	+2.25M <sup>xviii</sup>	Even <sup>xix</sup>	+10M	Even	Even	Even
<b>4. Tax Policy</b>	No	Yes <sup>xx</sup>	Yes <sup>xxi</sup>	No	No	No	No	HST <sup>*</sup>	Yes <sup>xxii</sup>	Yes	HST <sup>*</sup>	No	No	No
<b>5. Government-based Leadership</b>	No	Yes <sup>xxiii</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>xxiv</sup>	Yes <sup>xxv</sup>	Yes <sup>xxvi</sup>	No	Yes <sup>xxvii</sup>	Yes <sup>xxviii</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>xxix</sup>
<b>6. Sector-led Capacity Building Organization</b>	No <sup>xxx</sup>	Yes <sup>xxxi</sup>	Yes <sup>xxxii</sup>	Yes <sup>xxxiii</sup>	Yes <sup>xxxiv</sup>	Yes <sup>xxxv</sup>	Yes <sup>xxxvi</sup>	Yes <sup>xxxvii</sup>	Yes <sup>xxxviii</sup>	Yes	Yes	No	Yes <sup>xxxix</sup>	No
<b>7. Dedicated Infrastructure Investments</b>	Ad hoc	Yes <sup>xi</sup>	Yes <sup>xii</sup>	Yes <sup>xiii</sup>	No	No	Yes <sup>xliii</sup>	Yes <sup>xliiv</sup>	Yes <sup>xliiv</sup>	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No

## A New Way Forward: An Alberta Sport Policy Framework

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- <sup>i</sup> Canada Sport Policy
- <sup>ii</sup> [http://www.tcr.gov.nl.ca/tcr/publications/2007/active\\_healthyNL.pdf](http://www.tcr.gov.nl.ca/tcr/publications/2007/active_healthyNL.pdf)
- <sup>iii</sup> <http://sportpei.www23.a2hosting.com/publications/PEISportStrategy-2002.pdf>
- <sup>iv</sup> Active2010, <http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca/en/active2010/about/active2010-strategy-e.pdf>
- <sup>v</sup> Delivered by Sport Manitoba
- <sup>vi</sup> [http://www.hls.gov.bc.ca/sport/docs/BC\\_Policy\\_final.pdf](http://www.hls.gov.bc.ca/sport/docs/BC_Policy_final.pdf)
- <sup>vii</sup> A Sport Plan for Alberta, lapsed in 2010
- <sup>viii</sup> <http://www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/publications/AppendixA.pdf>, renewed plan under development
- <sup>ix</sup> Ontario Sport Action Plan <http://www.ontariosportactionplan.com/content/home.asp>
- <sup>x</sup> Manitoba Action Plan for Sport, <http://www.sportmanitoba.ca/downloads/MAPS.pdf>
- <sup>xi</sup> [http://www.2010legaciesnow.com/game\\_plan\\_bc/](http://www.2010legaciesnow.com/game_plan_bc/)
- <sup>xii</sup> Alberta Budget 2010
- <sup>xiii</sup> Additional funding in Budget 2010 for OTP, Team Sport and others
- <sup>xiv</sup> Main and supplementary estimates, Government of Nova Scotia, 2010
- <sup>xv</sup> <http://www.budget.gov.nl.ca/budget2010/speech/default.htm>
- <sup>xvi</sup> <http://www.gov.pe.ca/budget/2010/estimates.pdf>, page 93
- <sup>xvii</sup> Committed funding for the Institut national du sport du Quebec, Budget 2010-2011, page 33
- <sup>xviii</sup> [http://www.sportmanitoba.ca/mediacentre/news\\_budget2010.php](http://www.sportmanitoba.ca/mediacentre/news_budget2010.php)
- <sup>xix</sup> <http://www.sasksport.sk.ca/pdf/0809AnnualReport.pdf>
- <sup>xx</sup> Child Fitness Tax Credit
- <sup>xxi</sup> Healthy Living Tax Credit
- <sup>xxii</sup> Manitoba Child Fitness Tax Credit, <http://www.gov.mb.ca/finance/pcredits.html#ceitc>
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Sport Canada
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Department of Recreation and Sport
- <sup>xxv</sup> Sport new Brunswick
- <sup>xxvi</sup> <http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/loisirSport/>
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Sport Manitoba, <http://www.sportmanitoba.ca/index.php>
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Sask Sport Inc <http://www.sasksport.sk.ca/>
- <sup>xxix</sup> Sport Nunavut, <http://www.gov.nu.ca/cley/home/english/sportsintro.html>
- <sup>xxx</sup> Sport Alberta
- <sup>xxxi</sup> The Sport Matters Group
- <sup>xxxii</sup> Sport Nova Scotia
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> [http://www.sportnl.ca/who\\_we\\_are/mission\\_statement.html](http://www.sportnl.ca/who_we_are/mission_statement.html)
- <sup>xxxiv</sup> <http://sportpei.www23.a2hosting.com/index.php>
- <sup>xxxv</sup> Sport New Brunswick
- <sup>xxxvi</sup> <http://www.sportsquebec.com/>
- <sup>xxxvii</sup> Sport Alliance of Ontario, <http://www.sportalliance.com/content/home.asp>
- <sup>xxxviii</sup> Sport Manitoba, <http://www.sportmanitoba.ca/index.php>
- <sup>xxxix</sup> Sport North
- <sup>xl</sup> Year 2 of the Stimulus Plan and existing commitments through Build Canada
- <sup>xli</sup> Range of commitments:  
<http://www.sportnovascotia.ca/Advocacy/2009ProvincialElection/2009ProvincialElectionCandidatesQuestions/tabid/431/Default.aspx>
- <sup>xlii</sup> <http://www.budget.gov.nl.ca/budget2010/highlights/default.htm>
- <sup>xliii</sup> Funding for arena retrofits, Budget 2010-2011, page 33, total commitment of \$185M
- <sup>xliv</sup> New investments for Pan-American Games, <http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/economy/ltr/2010/ch5.html>
- <sup>xlv</sup> Funding for Sport Manitoba's Sport for Life Centre, providing new administrative and program space for amateur sport organizations and the community, including a new home for the Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame and Museum. [http://www.sportmanitoba.ca/mediacentre/news\\_budget2010.php](http://www.sportmanitoba.ca/mediacentre/news_budget2010.php)